



Twisleton Fienes.



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THE
MINSTREL;
OR,
ANECDOTES
OF
DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGES
IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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THE

MINISTRIES

ANECDOTES

OF THE CIVIL AND MILITARY

MINISTRIES OF GREAT BRITAIN

AND IRELAND

FROM 1702 TO 1832

BY JAMES H. STUART



MINSTREL.

CHAP. IX.

AS the distance was very considerable from Wakefield to Grafton; and as at that time of the year, for it was Christmas-day when the journey was begun, the roads were very bad, so that she could not reasonably expect the young man's return in many days, yet, when the first week was past, Eleanor eagerly looked out for him, and longed for the intelli-

gence he might probably bring, that all her desires had been complied with. In the interim, Philip was nearly recovered, and began to be earnest to rejoin the heir of York, who, they were informed, had gained a victory over the detachment of Margaret's army, which had been sent against him, and was upon his march to London.

One evening as they were sitting and conversing together, their host entered ;
 " Will your honours pardon me," said he, " if I introduce an ancient friend of mine into this apartment ? He is come many a weary mile to see me ; the night is bitter cold, and the wind whistles bleak through the hole of the door in the other room."

" We cannot object to the admittance of any friend of your's, my kind host ; but are we not in danger of being betrayed by him ?"

" He

“ He is a soldier, please your honour;
 “ that is to say, he *was* one, for his in-
 “ firmities, God help him ! have disabled
 “ him from service, and a brave soldier
 “ will not betray even an enemy. Per-
 “ haps he may entertain you, for it is the
 “ joy of his heart to tell of the battles he
 “ hath been in ; he was an archer, please
 “ your honour, to our glorious Henry
 “ in France, and as brave a lad as ever
 “ drew a bow.”

“ Let him come in,” said Philip, “ I
 “ long to take the veteran by the hand.”

The leech withdrew, and in half a
 minute returned with a tall muscular
 figure ; a large scar seamed one eyebrow,
 and part of the forehead ; another lay
 across his cheek ; he had a wooden leg,
 and one arm : he bowed with much civili-
 ty, but without mean adulation. “ I beg
 “ your honour’s pardon,” said he, “ bu

“ my friend Simon would have me
 “ come in.”

“ Make no apologies,” said Philip,
 “ a brave foldier is a companion for
 “ kings; the greatest kings would make
 “ a sorry figure without them; they are
 “ the important cyphers that give conse-
 “ quence to the unit. Give me your
 “ hand, fellow foldier, I revere the ho-
 “ nest veteran, and when you have warm-
 “ ed and refreshed yourself, you will, I
 “ hope, give us the history of those limbs
 “ which you have sacrificed to your
 “ country.”

“ Your honour is kind, very kind;—
 “ oh! you remind me of my gracious
 “ master, the most affable, the most
 “ courteous of men, as well as the greatest
 “ of kings—it were a pleasure to bleed
 “ in his service. Ah! your honour,
 “ mine were *honest* scars, got in fighting
 “ with the natural enemies of my coun-
 “ try;

“try ; not such as men get in these un-
 “happy times, when brother wounds
 “brother, and the son lifts his hand
 “against the father.—Here’s your ho-
 “nour’s good health, and may the dis-
 “turbers of the public peace meet the
 “fate they so richly deserve !”

He took a hearty pull at the brown
 can, which, with some provisions, the
 leech had placed before him : he ate a
 large luncheon of bread and cheese, and
 sat himself down on a stool on one side of
 the fire-place.

“You would not then, if you had
 “your limbs, take any part in these
 “present wars ?” said Philip.

“Oh !” he exclaimed, starting up,
 and brandishing his staff like a lance,
 “I would sacrifice the remainder of my
 “limbs, I would shed the last drop of
 “my blood in defence of the son of my
 B 3 “king ;

“ king ; and yet,” added he, with a sigh,
 and dropping his weapon, “ the thought
 “ of *whom* I was fighting against, would
 “ rob my arm of half its force. Englishmen
 “ against Englishmen ! unnatural war !
 “ to think that for every man that I kil-
 “ led, I made a widow of a neighbour’s
 “ wife ! it would unnerve me, and the
 “ arrow would drop short. The duke
 “ of York—but he hath met with his
 “ deserts, I had the comfort of seeing
 “ his head upon the city gates.’

Philip frowned, he bit his lip ; a sup-
 plicating look from Eleanor repelled
 his rising ill humour. “ But if the
 “ crown was his *right*, my friend,”
 said he to the soldier, “ would you not
 “ have him assert that right ?”

“ Suppose it *was*,” he replied, “ and
 “ I am no judge of these matters, it *may*
 “ be so for aught I know ; would it not
 “ have been more generous to have
 “ waved

“ waved that right, than to acquire what
 “ was his due by the blood of thousands ?
 “ It must be a very selfish temper, that
 “ will seek honour and dignity for itself,
 “ at such an expence of happiness to
 “ others ; and unworthy is he to reign
 “ over a people, say I, who displays so
 “ little regard for their welfare.

“ Why now, there was his uncle Mortimer, your honour, the earl of March,
 “ was a very different sort of a man, and
 “ acted in a different manner when the
 “ father of this duke of York, the earl
 “ of Cambridge, who married Mortimer’s sister, ungratefully plotted against
 “ the king, and would have set up his
 “ brother-in-law as the true and lawful
 “ heir to the crown : that truly noble
 “ and royal spirit, as soon as he heard of
 “ the design, informed the king of it.
 “ You, said he, are my sovereign ; I have
 “ sworn allegiance to you, I will keep my
 “ oath inviolate till death, and never will

“ fail in paying the duty and obedience
 “ of a subject.—This was a *man*, your
 “ honour, one of generosity and con-
 “ science; for he would not assert a
 “ title which would involve his country
 “ in a civil war; and he shrunk from
 “ perjury. Yet have I heard this very
 “ man, for this very action, called foolish
 “ and spiritless: but it is a corrupt age,
 “ say I, that deems a regard for oaths a
 “ symptom of folly, and a desire to pre-
 “ serve the peace of a nation, want of
 “ spirit. His nephew had none of that
 “ folly about him.”

“ Were you with our glorious Henry,”
 said Eleanor, interrupting him, fearful
 he should say something which would
 enrage Philip, “ were you with him in
 “ his first expedition to France?”

“ I was, sir.”

“ You must have been very young
 “ then.”

“ I was

“ I was twenty-one that day the king
 “ set sail from Southampton, and that
 “ was forty-four years ago [the fif-
 “ teenth of last August.—Oh ! your ho-
 “ nour,” added he, turning to Philip,
 for Philip’s countenance bespoke the
 soldier ; the fine features of our heroine
 did not please him half so well.—“ Oh,
 “ what a glorious fight was seen on that
 “ day !—the sea covered with a fleet of
 “ fifteen hundred ships ; methinks I see
 “ them now,” said he, rising from his
 three-legged stool, his cheeks flushed
 and his eyes sparkling,—“ a moving
 “ city dancing on the waves, the silken
 “ streamers playing in the breeze, and
 “ the broad sails swelling with the wind,
 “ and carrying us all to Harfleur.”

“ You must have had a vast force on
 “ board for such an undertaking as the
 “ conquering a kingdom,” said Philip.

“ We had on board this fleet, fir,
 “ near fifty thousand honest hearts. I
 “ was——my God! what a difference
 “ have forty-four years made!—I was
 “ a foot-archer. I remember when we
 “ were just setting sail, a sad accident
 “ happened; one ship, by some misma-
 “ nagement, was set on fire, and the
 “ flames communicated to those nearest,
 “ so that three of the largest ships were
 “ burnt: when they were nearly con-
 “ sumed, the keel of the first ship burst
 “ from under water with such a sudden
 “ and tremendous flame, as surprised
 “ all that saw it; and some people look-
 “ ed upon it as an ill omen, and would
 “ have persuaded the king from the ex-
 “ pedition, but he had a soul above
 “ such foolish fancies; he laughed at
 “ them and said, the wind which then
 “ sprang up was a propitious omen,
 “ which he accepted, and would follow
 “ where it led him; he did so, and a
 “ few hours brought our gallant fleet to
 “ the

“ the mouth of the Seine, where we an-
 “ chored without opposition. When our
 “ gracious Henry touched the shore, he
 “ kneeled on the beach, in view of the
 “ whole fleet and army, and with hands
 “ and eyes uplifted, implored the God
 “ of battles to prosper him.—Oh, it was
 “ a lovely and affecting sight !”

“ You soon conquered Harfleur.”

“ We did so, your honour ; but it
 “ was at the expence of labour, health,
 “ and life. We were five weeks be-
 “ fore it, but they were five the most
 “ terrible weeks I ever knew : we were
 “ encamped near the sea, the salt air of
 “ which impregnated our provisions in
 “ such a manner, as to affect the consti-
 “ tutions of the whole army : to add to
 “ the misfortune, there is a river, your
 “ honour, runs through Harfleur, and
 “ the people there, by letting down
 “ the sluices, stopt the stream, and flood-

“ ed our whole camp ; so that, what with
 “ the damp of the fresh water, and the salt
 “ air from the sea, a general dysentery
 “ seized the army : but few soldiers were
 “ able to work ; the labour, therefore,
 “ of those few, in the siege of so large a
 “ place, was incessant, and inconceivably
 “ fatiguing ; more than two thousand of
 “ my brave companions died, and a
 “ great many people of quality.”

“ Was it a place of much strength ? ”

“ Very strong, your honour, and very
 “ bravely defended by the governor,
 “ lord Estouteville ; he had sent re-
 “ peatedly to the dauphin for assistance,
 “ who promised succours, but sent none.
 “ We had made a large breach in the walls,
 “ and the governor was sensible he could
 “ not hold out ; he therefore sent to our
 “ king ;—I remember it was on a Thurs-
 “ day, near midnight, to capitulate. The
 “ king insisted upon their surrendering at
 “ dis-

“ discretion; the governor requested a ces-
 “ sation of arms till the following Sunday,
 “ with leave to acquaint the constable
 “ d’Albert with his situation, in which
 “ time, if he was not relieved, he pro-
 “ mised to surrender to the king’s mercy;
 “ and as a proof that he meant to be true
 “ to his engagement, he offered to swear
 “ so to do upon Christ’s body in the sa-
 “ crament, and to give hostages of some
 “ people of prime consequence.

“ Our gracious Henry accepted these
 “ proposals, consented that the messen-
 “ gers to the French army should pass
 “ through our lines, and sent my lord
 “ bishop of Bangor to take the gover-
 “ nor’s oath, and receive the hostages.
 “ I, your honour, was one of the sol-
 “ diers who attended him, and I assure
 “ you, it was a very solemn sight, for
 “ the bishop marched to the walls of Har-
 “ fleur in procession, dressed in his grand
 “ robes; ten squires walked before him
 “ with

“ with lighted torches ; behind him,
 “ two and two, walked twenty-two
 “ chaplains, in their surplices, and copes
 “ of silk, and before each chaplain a
 “ squire with a torch ; all the squires
 “ wore the same livery ; an hundred
 “ soldiers followed, the gates were open-
 “ ed, and we all entered.

“ It was a piteous sight, your honour,
 “ to see the women and children weep-
 “ ing ; even the brave soldiers were low-
 “ spirited at the notion of every thing
 “ being delivered up to the mercy of the
 “ conqueror—their dear wives—their
 “ precious little ones—their *all* of happi-
 “ ness—poor creatures ! they did not
 “ know the kind and good Henry. I,
 “ and my companions comforted them :
 “ be of good cheer, said we, our royal
 “ master is the most merciful and best of
 “ kings ; you would receive no injury
 “ from him were you his enemies, but
 “ he looks upon you as his subjects : you
 “ will

“ will not then find from us the same
 “ barbarity which your countrymen prac-
 “ tised at Soissons, where the town was
 “ plundered, the churches robbed, and
 “ men and children murdered, and the
 “ women ill-treated—no, he will not per-
 “ mit any such wicked doings, neither
 “ will he desolate a country which he
 “ looks upon as belonging to his own
 “ dominions. Our words put them in
 “ good heart, your honour. In the
 “ morning the bishop returned in the
 “ same procession, and hostages were led
 “ before him; they were entertained very
 “ sumptuously in the king’s tent, though
 “ his highness was not there, and they
 “ were then given in charge to the prin-
 “ cipal officers, with the strictest or-
 “ ders that they should receive honoura-
 “ ble treatment.

“ Well, your honour, lord Hacque-
 “ ville returned with intelligence from
 “ the French general, that Harfleur
 “ could

“ could not be relieved within the time ;
 “ so on the Sunday, at midnight, five
 “ hundred soldiers marched from the
 “ camp ; the good bishop of Bangor, and
 “ a great many officers followed. The
 “ gates were not opened, but the gover-
 “ nor received us by ladders thrown over
 “ the walls ; and when we entered, we
 “ opened the gates, and admitted the bi-
 “ shop and the officers. In the morning,
 “ the duke of Clarence, the king’s bro-
 “ ther, entered in great state ; he offered
 “ the people the oath of allegiance to our
 “ king ; and those who refused to take it
 “ were to be sent prisoners to England.
 “ The clergy of all sorts, and the women,
 “ were permitted to leave the town in their
 “ best-cloaths, with as many things as they
 “ could carry without making a bundle,
 “ and five sols a piece were given them
 “ all for their present maintenance. There
 “ were near fifteen hundred women quit-
 “ ted the place, some of them very hand-
 “ some indeed, but we dared not touch
 “ one

“ one of them, so strict were our orders:
 “ one girl—I never from that time set my
 “ eyes on so beautiful a creature. I will
 “ own to your honour, that I took some
 “ pains to persuade her to follow a sol-
 “ dier’s fortune ; she wept, the dear soul
 “ wept when she refused me—but her mo-
 “ ther’s tears were more prevailing than
 “ my arguments ; she was a sweet crea-
 “ ture, almost fifty years have not worn
 “ her image from my heart.

“ Well, your honour,” continued he,
 after a minute’s pause, and having cleared
 his voice, which was a little impeded by
 something in his throat, “ when they were
 “ all out of town we carried them wine
 “ and refreshments ; my little girl was
 “ not forgotten. They were then safely
 “ conveyed to Lillebonne, but I was not
 “ on that service, though I very much
 “ wished it.” Again he hemmed. “ The
 “ garrison and officers were made prison-
 “ ers of war, and then the town was
 “ given

“ given up to the plunder of the soldiers,
 “ with strict orders to refrain from any
 “ cruelty or outrage. When the king
 “ entered Harfleur, he dismounted from
 “ his horse at the gate, his shoes were ta-
 “ ken off, and he walked barefoot with
 “ the devotion of a saint to the church
 “ of St. Martin, where he gave glory to
 “ God for this success of his arms.

“ Our next action, your honour,”—his
 smiles and animation returned,—“ our
 “ next action was the glorious battle of
 “ Agincourt—your honour hath heard of
 “ *that*.”

“ I have, my friend—what English-
 “ man hath not heard of that field, where
 “ his countrymen reaped such immortal
 “ honour? Were you in it?”

“ It is the pride and glory of my heart
 “ that I was not only *in it*, but had the
 “ happiness of being in the *van* of the
 “ glorious

“ glorious line. If your honours would
 “ not think me too tedious, I would tell
 “ you all about it.”

“ If it would not fatigue you.”

“ *Fatigue me!* it would dome good—
 “ it is far better for my spirits than my
 “ friend Simon’s nappy ale, and that is
 “ excellent—here’s your honour’s good
 “ health. After the king had regulated
 “ the affairs of Harfleur, repaired the for-
 “ tifications, and placed in the garrison
 “ two thousand select men, he called a
 “ council of war, wherein it was deter-
 “ mined, that as the season was so far ad-
 “ vanced, and as a great many men had
 “ lost their lives at the siege, and more
 “ perished, and were daily perishing by
 “ disease, it was most advisable to
 “ put an end to the campaign, send the
 “ sick and wounded to England, with
 “ part of the army, and place the rest in
 “ safe and convenient winter quarters, for
 “ which

“ which Harfleur was deemed improper ;
 “ its situation being unwholesome, and
 “ provisions and forage scarce ; it was
 “ determined therefore to leave it with the
 “ garrison only, and put the troops into
 “ Calais and the villages round : ” “ But,
 “ said the gallant Henry, the French shall
 “ not say that after taking one town, we
 “ silently drew off in fear of the army they
 “ are assembling against us ; we will not
 “ go by sea to Calais, but march boldly
 “ through their country ; we will pass
 “ the Somme, where it was once forded
 “ by my great-grand-father, Edward the
 “ third ; and we will, my boys, if it
 “ please God to bless us, rival that great
 “ warrior’s fame.

“ Accordingly, part of the army, several
 “ sick noblemen, with the noblemen
 “ and governor of Harfleur, and the sick
 “ and wounded soldiers, were sent to
 “ England under the command of the
 “ duke of Clarence. Fifteen days after
 “ the

“ the surrender of Harfleur, we began
 “ our march from thence to Calais, and
 “ a perilous march it was ; for the roads,
 “ from a vast quantity of rain, were deep
 “ and fatiguing ; a multitude of small
 “ rivers crossed the country, the bridges
 “ over which were all broken ; the cause-
 “ ways over the marshes were destroyed ;
 “ the country so wasted, that very little
 “ provisions and forage could be had ;
 “ every village was up in arms against us ;
 “ d’Albert, with a choice body of troops,
 “ watched our motions, harassed our
 “ march, and cut off our stragglers, and
 “ detached parties ; and that fatal disease
 “ still pursued us, and carried off every
 “ day some of my brave companions.

“ All these difficulties we should have
 “ been unable to struggle through under
 “ any other leader ; but the smiles of our
 “ gracious king cheered our hearts, and
 “ his wise example animated us ; for he
 “ partook every hardship, and even as-
 “ sisted

“ fisted us in our most laborious exer-
 “ cises, and with him we went cheerfully
 “ and boldly forwards.

“ We began our march along the
 “ coast of Normandy ; but that narrow
 “ track being incapable of supplying our
 “ army with provisions, we took our
 “ course farther up the country, the king
 “ prohibiting us, upon pain of death,
 “ from committing any violence on the
 “ inhabitants.—I come not, said that
 “ good prince, to make war on women,
 “ and children, and defenceless country
 “ people, but upon armed enemies :—
 “ and I remember a soldier was im-
 “ mediately hanged that stole a chalice
 “ from a church, and the king would not
 “ move his ensigns till that justice was
 “ executed. No violence was used but
 “ for contributions for provisions, and
 “ very little was necessary for that pur-
 “ pose ; for our orderly behaviour so plea-
 “ sed the country people, that they very
 “ readily

“ readily furnished us with what they had,
 “ and even entertained us at their houses.

“ But when we reached the ford of the
 “ Somme at Blanquetague, which Ed-
 “ ward the third had passed when he
 “ gained the great victory of Cressy, to
 “ our great disappointment we found the
 “ French had rendered the passage im-
 “ practicable, by driving sharp stakes into
 “ the river; and there was also a strong
 “ body of forces posted on the other side.
 “ Any other general would have been
 “ alarmed at those difficulties and dangers
 “ which were at every step increasing,
 “ and would have returned back to Har-
 “ fleur whilst it was yet in his power,
 “ from whence we might have been easily
 “ transported to Calais: but our daunt-
 “ less commander panted to emulate the
 “ glories of his grandfather, and the more
 “ of danger the greater was the spur to
 “ encounter it; and animated by our be-
 “ loved monarch, there was not a soldier
 “ in

“ in the army whose heart did not burn
 “ with the same ardour. We proceeded
 “ higher up the river to the bridge at
 “ Pont de Remy, which we found too
 “ strongly guarded to attempt; and at the
 “ bridge of St. Maxence, a body of thirty
 “ thousand men were drawn up on the
 “ other side in order of battle; but con-
 “ tent with preventing our passing the
 “ bridge, they drew back, and suffered
 “ our handful of men to go quietly on.
 “ We passed Amiens, and encamped at
 “ Bonne for two days, where the people
 “ were making wine: we were, as your
 “ honours may well imagine, very gree-
 “ dy of the rich juice, but were not suf-
 “ fered to indulge in it: this we were
 “ inclined to think a hardship, and one of
 “ the officers spoke to the king about it,
 “ saying, that it might be convenient
 “ for the good fellows to fill their bot-
 “ tles; to which the king laughing,
 “ answered,—That they had his leav-
 “ to fill their bottles, but he strictly
 “ pro-

“ prohibited them from making bottles
 “ of their bellies. Near this village
 “ was a little castle on a rock, the cap-
 “ tain of which sent eight great baskets
 “ of bread to the king, (an acceptable
 “ present) for the country was so de-
 “ solate, we were very scantily supplied
 “ with that article ; and, indeed, except
 “ by an indulgence in new wine, there was
 “ very little danger of our surfeiting with
 “ an over-abundance in any thing. At
 “ Corbie, the people of Picardy defended
 “ a narrow pass very valiantly, against the
 “ foremost of our troops, and took the
 “ standard of Guyenne, which was very
 “ bravely retrieved by a master Bromley,
 “ a Staffordshire gentleman.

“ Between Corbie and Peronne, it
 “ was we passed the Somme, upon a
 “ bridge made of ladders, and the timbers
 “ of some houses, which were pulled
 “ down on purpose, and laid across the
 “ river : the king himself assisted at the

“ work, as well as the meanest soldier,
 “ from eight o’clock in the morning till
 “ afternoon; at which time, it being
 “ ready, the foot passed over first, and
 “ fixed the standard; then the horse,
 “ and then the rear-guard. Though it
 “ was dark night when all the army
 “ were got over, the king would not spend
 “ the night there, but marched in the
 “ dark till he came near Athies, where
 “ he lodged.

“ For several following days, we
 “ neither heard nor saw any thing of
 “ the French army, though we marched
 “ through several narrow passes, where
 “ they might have stopped us with great
 “ advantage: but when we reached
 “ Blagny, where we had a small river to
 “ cross, we found a detachment very busy
 “ in breaking down a bridge; we soon
 “ beat them off, and passed over. The
 “ duke of York, ascending a very high
 “ hill, descried the country every where
 “ full

“ full of soldiers, and his scouts informed
 “ him, that the army were marching in
 “ immense bodies towards Rousseauville
 “ and Agincourt, places close to where
 “ we were, and unavoidable in our route
 “ to Calais.

“ Hearing the enemy were so near,
 “ the king imagined they had intercepted
 “ our march to give us immediate battle.
 “ —He commanded the horsemen to
 “ alight, and the whole army to kneel,
 “ and implore the Divine assistance.—
 “ We were then drawn up in order of
 “ battle, and so continued till sun-set,
 “ in momentary expectation of being
 “ attacked : but the French, secure of
 “ us, as they supposed, marched to Agin-
 “ court, and there planted their stan-
 “ dards, and encamped in the open
 “ fields. The constable d’Albert was
 “ there with the royal standard of France,
 “ and the army consisted of not less than
 “ one hundred thousand fighting men ;

“ some have said, one hundred and fifty
 “ thousand. Finding the enemy not dis-
 “ posed to come to an engagement, we
 “ were drawn off the field, where we
 “ had stood so many hours, and we
 “ marched that night to Marfontelles, a
 “ little village so near Agincourt, that
 “ the distance between the two armies
 “ was not more than three bow-shots.

“ In the morning the king had certain
 “ intelligence of the immense forces of
 “ the enemy ; and now he began to feel
 “ how very perilous was his situation :—
 “ before him, intercepting his progress,
 “ was this vast body of men, fresh,
 “ healthy, vigorous ; well supplied with
 “ provisions, and necessaries of every
 “ kind : his own army not a fifth of their
 “ number, and those few weakened by
 “ sickness, exhausted by the fatigues of a
 “ long march, destitute of every accom-
 “ modation, and half starved. To re-
 “ treat, was impracticable ; for, with an
 “ army

“ army behind, it would be impossible
 “ to repass the Somme.

“ These were difficulties, your honour,
 “ which seemed insurmountable : our
 “ good king, unwilling to sacrifice his
 “ brave fellows against such odds, sent
 “ a herald to the French general, offering
 “ to restore Harfleur, to repair all the
 “ damages he had done in France, and
 “ even engage never more to invade it,
 “ if he might be allowed to pass unmo-
 “ lested to Calais.

“ This offer they rejected, and re-
 “ quired, that he and his army should
 “ surrender at discretion ; but the pro-
 “ posal met with the disdain it merited.
 “ Then the constable, the duke of Or-
 “ leans, and the duke of Bourbon, sent
 “ each a herald, to defy the king to
 “ battle, leaving him to fix the time
 “ and place. The heralds were enter-
 “ tained honourably, and returned with

“ marks of generosity ; but the king
 “ sent an answer by two of his own. He
 “ said, That if they had wished to have
 “ decided the quarrel between the two
 “ kingdoms by a general battle, they had
 “ it in their own power to chuse their time
 “ and place, from the moment of his
 “ leaving Harfleur ; he never, in the
 “ whole march, having put his troops
 “ into any place of strength, but always
 “ encamped in the open fields. That,
 “ circumstanced as he was at present,
 “ his army reduced in number, and those
 “ few fatigued by a long march, and
 “ weakened by sickness, he confessed he
 “ did not wish to encounter so vast a su-
 “ periority of fresh troops ; he desired only
 “ to be permitted to march to Calais.
 “ But though he was not solicitous for an
 “ engagement, so neither would he refuse
 “ it, if offered him. Another herald then
 “ came from the French princes, to sig-
 “ nify that they would give him battle
 “ on the Saturday following ; and the
 “ king

“ king generously rewarded him for his
 “ intelligence, by a present of two hun-
 “ dred crowns and a rich robe.

“ It was on a Monday when this mes-
 “ sage arrived ; so that there were five
 “ days to prepare for the battle ; and that
 “ time was not lost by our king. On
 “ many of the officers he conferred the
 “ honour of knighthood ; to others he
 “ promised honours and dignities ; to
 “ several of the knights and noblemen
 “ he presented, as marks of his appro-
 “ bation, collars studded with golden
 “ S.S. The common soldiers were en-
 “ couraged by the prospect of plun-
 “ dering the rich, gay Frenchmen, and
 “ every one was to be allowed the bene-
 “ fit of all the prisoners he took, the
 “ king only reserving to himself the
 “ higher orders of nobility. All the
 “ weapons and the armour were exa-
 “ mined and repaired ; the archers had
 “ orders, each to provide himself with a

“ long wooden pike, well sharpened at
 “ both ends; and the king was on horse-
 “ back from morning till night, busy in
 “ seeing every thing put in order, and
 “ in encouraging his troops. He remind-
 “ ed us of the great victories gained in
 “ France by our forefathers : he assured
 “ us, that the enemy, though numerous,
 “ were most of them raw, and undisci-
 “ plined ; and that the light armed, and
 “ nimble archers would, when they came
 “ to close fight, have greatly the ad-
 “ vantage over the most formidable part
 “ of their force, their men at arms, who,
 “ loaded with heavy armour, would soon
 “ be tired and out of breath.

“ These cheering words, and the good
 “ humour and affability with which they
 “ were spoken, had a wonderful effect
 “ upon the whole army : we despised
 “ the number of our enemies, forgot
 “ our own enfeebled state, our diseases,
 “ and our wants ; and all panted for the
 “ hour

“ hour in which we should have an op-
 “ portunity of displaying our affections
 “ for our darling prince, and either con-
 “ quer for him, or gloriously die in the
 “ attempt.

“ The French were differently em-
 “ ployed. Secure of victory, they were
 “ ambitious to join battle before the arri-
 “ val of the duke of Bretagne with twelve
 “ thousand men, and the lord marshal
 “ of France with six thousand men at
 “ arms, who were on their march towards
 “ them. They even debated whether
 “ the common soldiers should share the
 “ glory of the day, or only those who
 “ wore gold spurs; and, indeed, there
 “ were enough of knights and noblemen
 “ in that great host to have effected the
 “ purpose: they dispatched messengers to
 “ several cities to prepare grand re-
 “ joicings; they busied their fancies in
 “ contriving a chariot, in which to dis-
 “ play the captive king; they occupied

“ all their leisure time in playing at dice
 “ for the prisoners ; and they had even
 “ the insolence to send a herald to our
 “ king, to treat for his ransom.—Good
 “ God ! what an effect this had upon
 “ the soldiers ! It fired us all ; and
 “ hand was joined in hand throughout
 “ the whole camp, to revenge this af-
 “ front to a prince we adored.

“ Never, your honours, can I forget
 “ the night before that memorable day :
 “ the two camps were so near, that the
 “ noises made in either were heard by
 “ the other. It was bitter cold for the
 “ time of year, which was the 25th of
 “ October, and great fires were kindled
 “ in both camps : that of the French
 “ was filled with noise and tumult ; but
 “ they had no warlike music, and it was
 “ remarked by some of their soldiers,
 “ that not one horse was heard to neigh.
 “ I have always thought that extremely
 “ ominous, your honour. Among us
 “ was

“ was no hurry, no disorder; for though
 “ we were weakened by illness, fatigue,
 “ and, I may say, hunger, for our pro-
 “ visions were very short, we ate nuts
 “ instead of bread, and had no other
 “ drink but water, yet no one thought
 “ of sleep, but all, with composed spirits
 “ and firm resolution, prepared for the
 “ morning; whilst the cheerful and en-
 “ livening sounds of our drums and
 “ trumpets echoed throughout the camp.
 “ In the middle of the night we had an
 “ alarm, occasioned by the approach of
 “ two thousand bacinets * and archers;
 “ but, after some few arrows shot at
 “ random, we soon made them retreat.

“ At break of day our glorious king,
 “ armed all over but his head, heard
 “ mass, which was thrice celebrated:
 “ after which he called for his helmet,
 “ the crest of which was a crown of

* Men armed with helmets.

“ gold : and then, without any hurry or
 “ confusion, he drew out his army in
 “ order of battle ; and I think, I may
 “ venture to assert, that there was full as
 “ great superiority of skill on our side,
 “ as of numbers on the other.

“ The ground which our excellent ge-
 “ neral had chosen was narrow, and a
 “ range of woods on each side guarded
 “ our flanks. This situation, so happy
 “ for our small army, was very disad-
 “ vantageous to the immense one of the
 “ enemy ; for, it rendering them inca-
 “ pable of extending their line, that vast
 “ body was so crowded in its ranks, that
 “ many of the banners of their princes
 “ were obliged to be furled and carried
 “ off the field, there being no room to
 “ display them ; and the men were or-
 “ dered to shorten their lances, that they
 “ might manage them more compactly.

“ The French were drawn up in three
 “ lines ; and there was a prodigious dis-
 “ pute

“pute among their great ones, who
 “should lead the van; for as they were
 “certain the English must be routed at
 “the first onset, all were eager to share
 “the triumphs of the victory: at last it
 “was determined, that d’Albert should
 “lead them, but all would be there with
 “him to partake the honour of beating
 “us, so that in the first line was all the
 “noblest blood of France.

“Whilst they were busied in settling
 “these matters, our king detached four
 “hundred lances to the wood on the right
 “flank of the enemy, and two and fifty
 “choice archers to that on their left, who
 “were not to begin the assault till a sig-
 “nal given: and they wheeling off
 “behind the troops, and taking a com-
 “pass round, were safely stationed with-
 “out being perceived by the enemy: in-
 “deed, they had so thorough a con-
 “tempt of us, and were so perfectly as-
 “sured of victory, that they were not the
 “least attentive to our movements.

“The

“ The gallant Henry now appeared in
 “ the center of his line, on a stately white
 “ courser, his armour bright and daz-
 “ zling, and his golden crown flamed
 “ in the sun, which shone with unusual
 “ splendor on that glorious day. Four
 “ royal banners were unfurled before him,
 “ one was that of the Trinity, one of St.
 “ George, one of St. Edward, and the
 “ other the arms of England; a great
 “ number of led horses richly caparison-
 “ ed followed, and he was surrounded by
 “ all his chief officers and noblemen: I
 “ had the happiness with a battalion of
 “ archers to be stationed in the van, under
 “ the king’s uncle, the duke of York,
 “ who had intreated he might lead it. Our
 “ battalion were only in waistcoats; our
 “ bows were very long, and by our side
 “ we had a sword, battle-axe, and dag-
 “ ger: we had leather caps; some of our
 “ archers wore ozier ones, with an iron
 “ cross on the top; and on that day we
 “ carried the long wooden pikes, which
 “ the king had ordered us on purpose.

“ Thus, then, your honour, both ar-
 “ mies stood opposite to each other in
 “ order of battle ; between us was a
 “ large plowed field, with having been
 “ softened by a great deal of rain, was on
 “ the side of the French army, so poached
 “ up by the horses which the servants
 “ and pages had led about all night, that
 “ it was a deep mire, which they could
 “ hardly drag their legs out of ; and their
 “ men at arms with their heavy coats of
 “ armour, with greaves down to their
 “ feet, sunk into it, so that they moved
 “ with great difficulty ; and it was
 “ scarcely possible for them to march
 “ without breaking ranks.

“ After standing some time, and per-
 “ ceiving the French did not stir, the
 “ dauntless Henry resolved to make the
 “ first onset : he rode along the front of
 “ the battalions, and by his looks and
 “ words cheered our very souls : he made
 “ a long speech ; I forget what he said,
 “ but

“ but the effect was so great upon all the
 “ army, that we intreated that moment
 “ to be led towards the enemy. In this
 “ disposition, he made us all kneel, to
 “ implore the assistance of God Almighty,
 “ and the good bishop of Bangor gave us
 “ all his holy benediction. Your honours
 “ can scarcely conceive how these devout
 “ exercises, and this blessing, inspired us :
 “ we rose from our knees, our hearts
 “ light, our confidence firm, impatiently
 “ waiting the signal to advance. The
 “ king alighted from his horse, deter-
 “ mining on foot to share the fatigues and
 “ dangers of the day with the meanest
 “ soldier. Sir Thomas Erpingham gave
 “ the signal for battle, by throwing up
 “ his truncheon.

“ The standards were then commanded
 “ to be taken up, and the archers from
 “ the right to the left to advance. This
 “ we did with a shout, to nearly the mid-
 “ dle of the plain ; where the king, fear-
 “ ing

“ ing we should be out of breath, order-
 “ ed us to halt, and plant our pikes. This
 “ we performed, and then with another
 “ shout, we advanced a few paces beyond
 “ them. This shout was answered by one
 “ from the archers in ambush ; it was the
 “ general signal to shoot, and we all made
 “ such good use of our bows, and drew
 “ them with such strength and good will,
 “ that our arrows a yard long, and deeply
 “ barbed, did great execution.

“ This provoked the French : a thou-
 “ sand select horse advanced furiously,
 “ plunging through the mire, but with-
 “ out any order, the hindmost ranks pres-
 “ sing on the foremost, a confused heap of
 “ men ! for their horses, which had been
 “ stung by our arrows, were mad, and
 “ wholly ungovernable : on their ap-
 “ proach, we retired behind our pikes.

“ These horsemen, inclining their
 “ heads to avoid being dazzled by the
 “ sun,

“ sun, which shone brightly on their
 “ faces, and to prevent also our arrows
 “ striking through the vizors of their hel-
 “ mets, in the heat and eagerness of their
 “ advance, either not seeing our pikes,
 “ or disregarding them, spurred their
 “ horses so furiously against them, that
 “ they being set aslope, and very sharp,
 “ entered by dreadful wounds the breasts
 “ of the beasts: the creatures in pain,
 “ flounced and flung about, tumbled on
 “ the pikes, and impaled their riders by
 “ throwing them upon them.

“ Good God, your honours, what a
 “ fight was there ! numbers of both
 “ horses and men deeply gored ; some
 “ entirely struck through their bodies,
 “ some hanging by an arm or a thigh—
 “ the clattering of the armour of so many
 “ men tumbling in heaps—the clang of
 “ our arrows falling upon steel breast
 “ plates, helmets, and greaves—the cries
 “ of the wounded—the groans of the dy-
 “ ing—

“ ing—together formed such a fight,
 “ and such a sound, as is impossible to be
 “ conceived by those who have only been
 “ in common battles.

“ Thus terribly shattered, the few that
 “ were left of this troop retreated in such
 “ hurry and disorder upon the main
 “ body, of which the foot being heavy
 “ armed, advanced slowly, that they
 “ broke all their order; and we seeing
 “ their ranks opened, threw away our
 “ bows, and with sword or battle-axe in
 “ hand, hastened to a close fight, or ra-
 “ ther bloody execution; for though the
 “ men at arms repulsed us at first with
 “ great bravery, yet being disordered
 “ and broken, they could not sustain a
 “ second charge: besides, they had no
 “ room to move, but incumbered each
 “ other by their numbers, so that it is
 “ certain the multitude of them contri-
 “ buted to their own defeat; they were
 “ entirely routed, and the greatest part
 “ of them slain.

“ This

“ This was the fate of the first line
 “ under d’Albert, who had reckoned up-
 “ on us as so easy a conquest : but
 “ though the constable, with a great
 “ number of officers was killed, the bat-
 “ tle was far from being decided, for the
 “ second line, commanded by the duke
 “ of Alençon, stood firm and eager to
 “ engage. Our battalion was ordered to
 “ retire behind the main body, and form
 “ anew ; and our glorious king led up
 “ the second division to the charge, who,
 “ animated by our success, and the pre-
 “ sence of the king, performed prodi-
 “ gies of valour. But who shall speak
 “ the prowess of the gallant Harry him-
 “ self? in the conduct of war the first of
 “ generals, in action the most valorous
 “ of soldiers ! His excess of courage made
 “ him too much hazard a life on which
 “ depended the fate of the whole army ;
 “ yet the most timid caught fire at the
 “ example, and who could think of turn-
 “ ing his back upon the enemy, when the
 “ king

“ king levelled himself to the lowest of
 “ the soldiers, partook equally their fa-
 “ tigue and their danger, and fought in
 “ the front of his battalion as a common
 “ man ?

“ His person thus exposed, on whom
 “ the enemy by this time found depend-
 “ ed the fortune of the day, eighteen
 “ French knights combined to kill him,
 “ or perish in the attempt. With sword
 “ in hand they hewed their way to the
 “ place where he was fighting ; one of
 “ them with a battle-axe struck him a
 “ furious blow on the helmet, and in all
 “ probability that inestimable life would
 “ have fallen a sacrifice to the horrible
 “ association, had not in the moment
 “ captain David Gam, that gallant
 “ Welshman, and two more of the same
 “ country, rushed between, received the
 “ wounds intended for their prince, and
 “ gloriously given their lives for his.

“ When

“ When the king recovered the blow,
 “ he beheld them bleeding by his side,
 “ dying, but yet sensible ; he had then
 “ but one way of testifying his gratitude,
 “ and he cheered their parting moments
 “ with the honour of knighthood—the
 “ *highest* honour a soldier can receive
 “ when it is the meed of valour.—
 “ Alas ! said he, my valiant preservers !
 “ my soul is wrung with anguish, that
 “ this empty form is all the recompence
 “ which is in my power.

“ This danger seemed to stimulate him
 “ to fresh exploits ; he, with his brother
 “ Gloucester at his side, charged the ene-
 “ my with redoubled fury ; they plunged
 “ into the thickest of the battle, but found
 “ themselves separated from their troops,
 “ and the duke of Gloucester was felled
 “ to the earth with a mace. The king,
 “ the most affectionate of brothers, co-
 “ vering him with his shield, sustained
 “ the shock of a whole host of enemies,
 “ when

“ when the duke of York, who, with our
 “ battalion of archers, was again return-
 “ ed to the scene of action, came in that
 “ moment to his relief; and a fortunate
 “ moment it was, for in the instant we
 “ came up, the king had received a blow
 “ upon his head, which made him stag-
 “ ger and fall upon his knees; but he
 “ sprang up, and laid the daring knight
 “ dead at his feet.

“ Upon hearing of the king's danger,
 “ new fury seized the troops, and they rush-
 “ ed forward with so much impetuosity,
 “ that the French ranks were every where
 “ broken, the men flying, and regard-
 “ less of their officers, who endeavoured,
 “ but in vain, to rally them. The duke
 “ of Alençon perceiving all lost without
 “ a desperate push, put himself at the
 “ head of a chosen band, and cutting his
 “ way to the king, exclaimed that he was
 “ the duke of Alençon, and in the same
 “ moment lifting up his sword, he with
 “ a fu-

“ a furious blow cleft in two the royal
 “ crest of the helmet. Henry was not
 “ long ere he returned the rough saluta-
 “ tion, he brought the duke to the
 “ ground, and slew two of his followers.
 “ The king was eager to save the life of
 “ Alençon, but the soldiers were so en-
 “ raged that they would hear nothing,
 “ and cut him to pieces in a moment.

“ Thus was the second line routed ;
 “ yet there was one line still entire, and
 “ that division far out-numbered the
 “ whole English army. Had they ad-
 “ vanced, they would probably have
 “ snatched the victory from us, for they
 “ had never been in action, were fresh
 “ and vigorous, whilst our *whole* army
 “ had been for hours engaged, and were
 “ just fainting with fatigue. But it pleased
 “ the Almighty, whose succour our king
 “ had implored, to make faint their hearts:
 “ they were intimidated by the fate
 “ of the two other lines, and the scene of
 “ blood

“ blood before them ; they refused to
 “ obey the command of their generals,
 “ and retired from the field.”

The veteran pausing for a little breath, Simon, who had not quite so much pleasure in listening to the history of battles, as his old friend had in reciting them, thought the story somewhat tedious, and reminded his guests of the time of night, which was beyond that to which Philip had been restricted ; he remonstrated against late hours, as prejudicial to all, but particularly injurious to invalids, and drew off his talkative companion to the room where he meant he should sleep. Our heroine retired to her little cabin, and left Philip to his repose.

C H A P. X.

THE favourite conversation of Philip was military achievements, and he had peculiar pleasure in hearing recited the deeds of the warlike Henry ; so that he equally gratified the old soldier and himself by the next day renewing the topic of the evening ; and making the veteran fight over all his battles, and give the most minute account of every action he had witnessed. But I must be excused particularizing a conference interesting only to themselves ; for I confess myself of the same mind with Eleanor, who, tired of the subject, disgusted with a continued scene of war and carnage, panted for nothing so much as the tranquil pleasures of peace ; and to relieve her spirits, proposed a walk in the afternoon, imagining that,

that, as the country was now cleared of both armies, she was perfectly safe : and Philip, who liked no place when she was absent, having nearly exhausted the tales of the veteran, would accompany her.

The weather was frosty, clear, and cheerful ; both enjoyed the freshness of the air, after being several days shut up in a little cottage ; Philip thought himself much strengthened by it, and they prolonged their walk till the day was declining, when they returned.

Their path lay across the church-yard ; and they had advanced to about the middle of it, when the sound of sobs and groans to their left hand engaged their attention ; they looked round, and at some little distance descried a venerable figure, with long silver locks, prostrate on the ground.

They hastened towards him, supposing that he needed their assistance : but too

much immersed in sorrow to hear their footsteps, or heed their approach, they stood some time near him, unobserved spectators of the frenzy of his grief, and Eleanor knew him for the unhappy father whose cottage she had looked into after the battle.

He had thrown himself across the grave of his son, was embracing passionately the damp earth, and kissing the green sod: he then raised himself on his knees, the tears streaming down his wrinkled face, his breast heaving with sighs.—
 “ Oh, my son !” he cried, “ let these
 “ bitter agonies expiate my guilt—let
 “ these tears wash away my sin, unnatural
 “ father as I am! oh, let these groans
 “ from my torn heart compensate for thy
 “ dying ones—let me pay the immense
 “ debt of pain, and then lay me down in
 “ the same grave.—I will seek thee, my
 “ son, in the earth—I will dig a passage
 “ to thee whom they have cruelly buried
 “ from

“from me, and on thy poor mangled
 “body—mangled by a *father*——O
 “God! on thy poor mangled limbs will
 “I offer up my worthless life.”

He tore off the sods which covered the grave, when Philip and Eleanor interposed, and with great difficulty prevented his proceeding. The humane and sympathising softness of Eleanor’s manner, the harmony of her voice, and the divine arguments she brought to console him, had at length their effect; she persuaded him to leave the place, and she and Philip conducted him home, where they found his wretched wife weeping in complicated grief, and the unhappy young woman affianced to the son, sinking under her woes, and with every appearance of soon following her lover to the grave.

Even the rugged bosom of Philip was affected at this melancholy scene: indeed,

his whole character, from the mild conversation of Eleanor, appeared softened and humanised : her features, and the sound of her voice so much resembling the daughter of de Longueville, the obligation he was under to her, her superlative merit, her amiable manners, even the circumstance of her leaving Margaret, for the barbarous treatment of the duke of York (for of that Eleanor had acquainted him) all together bound her strongly to his heart ; he felt for her an enthusiasm of friendship, which could not support the idea of separation, which our heroine sometimes suggested : “ No, Jasper,” said he, “ we will *never* part. If thou hast no friends, no connections, thou shalt suffer me to supply these to thee, as far as I am able ; for do I not owe all to him who snatched me from the grave ? Thou shalt eat of my bread, and drink of my cup—thou shalt, Jasper, partake with me whatever fortune the will of God sends me.”

Though

Though the heart of Eleanor did not beat responsive to his warm attachment, yet was her regard for him much heightened by his improving virtue : she knew not what course of life to pursue in preference to this ; and she determined to continue with him for the present, till some more eligible situation might offer.

C H A P. XI.

THE time was expired when Eleanor might with all reason have expected the return of the young man from Grafton, and she became uneasy that no tidings of him had been received : unwilling to leave the village till she heard the success of his embassy, she had to combat the impatience of Philip, whose health was nearly restored, and who was anxious to be gone : she could not inform him of her real reasons for staying, for she had carefully concealed the whole affair from him, which must have led to dangerous inquiries and surmises ; she would have persuaded him to have left her, but that he would not hear of with patience.

It was a few evenings after the rencontre with the unhappy father, that as
Philip

Philip and our heroine were again taking their walk, crossing the highway, a man who was riding fast, seeing Philip, stopt short, surveyed him for a moment, then threw himself off his horse, ran towards him with an exclamation of joyful surprise, and Philip immediately recognized a servant of his father's.

The man then acquainted him with the extreme anxiety St. Julian had been in ever since the battle, and that after the most diligent inquiries, learning no tidings of him, he had sorrowfully concluded he was among the slain, or, perhaps, what was nearly as bad, a prisoner; for such was the extreme cruelty exercised in the unnatural war on both sides, that being taken prisoner, and being put to death, were nearly equivalent terms to people of any distinction.

From him they also learned the state of the public affairs; he confirmed the ac-

count they had before received that the young duke of York had defeated the detachment sent against him under Jasper Tudor; had taken prisoner his father, Owen Tudor, the husband of Catharine, the relict of Henry the fifth, and beheaded him. He added, that Margaret's own division of the army, on its march to London had been met at St. Alban's by Warwick, over whom she had been enabled to gain a complete victory, by the treachery of lord Lovelace. Henry, who accompanied Warwick, fell now into the hands of his own party, with lord Bonville, and sir Thomas Kiriell, both of whom continued with him, after they found the fortune of the day was on the side of Lancaster, at his own earnest request, he giving them the most solemn assurances of good treatment from the queen, in return for their attentive and benevolent behaviour to himself: but so little did Margaret respect the engagement of her husband, that she commanded
both

both their heads to be struck off by the common hangman. That on preparing to continue her march towards London, she found her progress impeded by the duke of York, who having advanced with his troops, and collected the remains of Warwick's army, appeared in great force against her : that finding his army greatly superior to her own, she had declined an engagement, and retreated once more towards the north ; and that Edward was now on his full march to London, where every one expected he would be acknowledged king.

An ardent desire of witnessing the glory of his young patron, added to that of ending his father's anxieties, determined Philip to leave the village in the morning ; nor could Eleanor resist his eager solicitations to accompany him, though she wished to remain there till the young man's return from Grafton : horses were provided, the servant carried her harp,

and she performed her journey with perfect ease.

They reached London a few hours after Edward's army had entered it, and found every token of the most extravagant joy at that event, for the whole city was devoted to the house of York : it was with difficulty they made their way through crowds of the populace, who filled the air with acclamations of triumph. They went immediately to the house of the earl of Warwick, called Warwick's inn; where with that nobleman they found St. Julian.

The reception which St. Julian gave his son, can be much better portrayed by the imagination than by words. The first raptures were scarcely past, when Philip presented the minstrel, with a short but very comprehensive eulogium : and Eleanor, who had dreaded St. Julian's suspicious and piercing eyes, was relieved by per-

perceiving that though he acknowledged in very high terms their obligation, he had very little attention for any object but his son, and that her features seemed to be unremarked by him.

Philip next presented her to the noble earl, recounting at the same time her motive for leaving Margaret, with whom she was in high favour, and had a comfortable establishment. This information was sufficient to ensure her the affection of the whole party; they made her minutely describe the circumstances of York's death, the particulars of which had not before with any certainty reached them. But Eleanor found them so irritated at her recital, that she repented making it; for though she detested Margaret, she did not wish to stir up vengeance against her, as she had great reverence for Henry, and a sincere affection for his spirited and amiable son; and she lamented that their fates were unavoidably connected with one,

one, who by the inhumanity of her conduct, must draw down upon her the judgement of Heaven.

The next morning all the chiefs of the York party sat in council. No longer with-held by the prudent caution and moderation of the deceased York, they threw off all reserve; and affecting to look upon the opposition of Margaret, as the act of Henry, by which he violated the stipulation of the parliament in his favour, and in so doing, by the adjustment of the two houses in such case, gave York an indisputable right to ascend the throne, they determined that Edward should take immediate possession of it.

To wait the most legal method by assembling the parliament, was to suffer the present ferment of the fluctuating multitude to subside, and they wished to have the appearance of the general concurrence of the people; the army was there-

therefore ordered to assemble in St. John's fields, whither also people of all ranks repaired.

At the head of his nobles and chiefs, on a fine prancing steed, richly caparisoned, the graceful heir of York made his entry, and placed himself in a situation conspicuous to the whole multitude; while his partisans, opening the way to the people's view of him, ranged themselves behind and on each side.

Edward, then in the bloom of youth, was the handsomest and finest formed man in the kingdom; his air lofty, bold, intrepid; his manners courteous, affable, insinuating; passionately adored by the women for his personal graces, not less so by the men for his warlike and enterprising spirit; the air was rent with shouts of applause, and blessings from every tongue were poured upon him.

The bishop of Salisbury then in a long and eloquent speech, calculated to awaken the detestation of the multitude against what he called the *usurpation* and tyranny of the rival family, and to excite their admiration and affection towards the house of York; when he had raised their passions to the proper pitch, inquired, whether they would still acknowledge Henry for their king. Groans, hisses, every mark of dislike and disapprobation, was the answer received.

The bishop, then turning to the fine figure of Edward, and pointing him out to the populace, demanded, whether they would acknowledge *that* youth, the heir of the murdered York, for their sovereign.

An universal shout of consent and applause filled the air.

Edward gracefully bowed his thanks, diffused around his fascinating charms,
and

and attempted to speak his gratitude; but his voice was drowned in the acclamations of the multitude: they were charmed with the effort, but their approbation was too noisy and obstreperous to suffer any to be heard but themselves.

Edward then and his partisans, the magistrates of the city, the nobility and people of distinction, with the bishops, adjourned to Baynard's castle, the noble house of the York family in Thames street, and there all ratified in form the popular election: the evening concluded with the utmost festivity, and in the morning the new king was proclaimed with great pomp, by the title of Edward the fourth.

All now was feasting and riotous joy. Those ungovernable spirits, turbulent and ferocious in war, equally distinguished themselves by an unbridled indulgence of their passions in their bacchanalian revels; and the gentle and modest spirit of Elea-

Eleanor found the scenes of their pleasures still more disgusting than those of their animosities ; she was constrained, under pretence of illness, to shut herself up in her chamber to avoid them ; for in the house of the earl of Warwick she was in the midst of the highest excesses.

That mighty baron, who could dispose of crowns, and overawe princes, lived with the retinue and state of a monarch, surrounded, besides his menial train, by a crowd of gentlemen, and the first military characters in the kingdom : six oxen were slain every morning for their breakfast ; and he commanded, that at the numerous taverns round Warwick-inn, where the partisans of York had taken up their residence, that every gentleman should have as much of his meat, either boiled, or roast, as he could take away upon the point of his dagger. When he went out upon state occasions, six hundred servants attended him, in liveries of

of fine scarlet cloth jackets, with the crest of the Nevils, the bear and ragged staff, embroidered in silver, on their backs and breasts. His hospitality was so great, that at his various houses and castles, forty thousand men were daily fed at his expence.

His interest with all ranks of men became thus unbounded. But Warwick was not only rendered popular by his magnificent and princely spirit, but also by the amiableness of his manners : open and frank, his undaunted soul sat upon his brow, and spoke with unqualified sincerity from his lips : yet was there as much humanity as true bravery in his heart ; as much affability as fearlessness in his manner. His presents were not only regarded for their intrinsic value, but displayed with pride as testimonies of the attention of a man whom all so highly venerated : his approbation was received with transport, for all knew he never spoke aught but his genuine sentiments ;
and

and his slightest promise was deemed equal to the oaths of others, for Warwick would stir heaven and earth rather than falsify his word.

By this exalted character, Eleanor was beheld with an eye of favour: her compassion for York first introduced her to his notice; her conversation charmed him, and he listened delighted when to her harp she sang the mighty deeds of our forefathers. “This boy,” said he to Philip, one day when she had just quitted the room, “is an amiable creature, “but not happily stationed; he is too “gentle, too tender, for the society of “soldiers:—I have an inclination to beg “him of you, and send him into the “north to teach my daughters on the “harp. What say you, Philip? will “you yield him to me?”

“With pleasure, my lord!”

Eleanor

Eleanor was in raptures at the news: there was nothing she longed for so much as to be again among her own sex; and the intelligence which was just received of the queen's being afresh in force in the north, accelerated that wished event; for Edward and the earl of Warwick were preparing to meet her: it was proposed that our heroine should go with the army, and then be sent forward to Westmorland, where the countess of Warwick and her daughters then resided.

C H A P. XII.

AS the stay of Eleanor in the metropolis was to be very short, Philip, who parted from her with infinite regret, sacrificing his own inclinations to a regard for her happiness, solicitous to give her as much pleasure as possible, proposed her seeing every thing in the city and its environs worthy of notice, and carried her himself to his favourite diversion at the bear-garden in Southwark.

Supposing my fair reader never to have partaken that sublime amusement, for the gratification of her curiosity I will describe it as I collect it from the words of an old author :

“ Well, fir, the bears were brought
 “ forth into the court, and the dogs set to
 “ them

“ them to argue the point face to face.
 “ There were no lazy lookers on, but
 “ both sides eager in argument : if the
 “ dog in pleading would pluck the bear
 “ by the throat, the bear with traverse
 “ would claw him again by the scalp.
 “ This with fending and proving,
 “ scratching and biting, by plain tooth
 “ and nail, on one side and t’other,
 “ such a loss of blood and leather was
 “ there between them, as a month’s lick-
 “ ing, I ween, will not recover, and yet
 “ they remained as far out as ever they
 “ were. It was sport very pleasant of
 “ these beasts to see the bear with his
 “ pink eyes leering after his enemy’s ap-
 “ proaches, the nimbleness and watch-
 “ fulness of the dog to take his advan-
 “ tage, and the force and experience of
 “ the bear to avoid his assaults. If he
 “ was bitten in one place, how he would
 “ shrink in another to get free : and if he
 “ was taken once, then what shift, with
 “ biting, with clawing, with roaring,
 “ with

“with tossing, and tumbling, how he
 “would work to wind himself from
 “thence ; and when he was loose, to see
 “him shake his ears twice or thrice,
 “with the blood and slaver about his
 “fiznamy, was matter of goodly re-
 “lief.”

As Philip was much occupied in the
 military preparations which were hurry-
 ing on with great expedition, he introdu-
 ced Eleanor to the acquaintance of a be-
 nedictine monk, who promised to con-
 duct her to those places which were wor-
 thy her observation, particularly the
 churches and convents, and the shrines
 and relics of the saints.

He carried her first to the priory of St.
 Bartholomew, founded, as he informed
 her, by one of her own profession, Ra-
 here, the minstrel of Henry the first. The
 monk told her a long story of the wicked
 life of Rahere, and his conversion by a
 horrible

horrible dream, in which he was warned
 o make atonement for his evil deeds, by
 building this priory, and its church;
 there he laid his bones, and the benedic-
 tine pointed out to her the monument
 which was erected over them.

He next conducted her to St. Paul's
 church, in which were deposited the re-
 mains of that renowned prince John of
 Gaunt, and his first wife Blanch; his im-
 mense spear and shield hanging as tro-
 phies on his monument. There Eleanor
 saw the high altar glittering with gold and
 gems, the gifts of various princes; and
 also the holy shrine of St. Erkenwald, to
 which innumerable devotees had per-
 formed pilgrimages, and where they had
 left tokens of their veneration in rich pre-
 sents. John of France, when prisoner in
 England, had offered to the shrine of this
 saint four basons of solid gold.

“ But, O my son !” cried the benedic-
 tine, “ that thou wert here but in pro-
 “ per season, to see the most jovial offer-
 “ ing made to St. Paul, that ever was
 “ made to any saint ! Twice in the year,
 “ a fat doe in winter, and a fat buck in
 “ summer, is brought by some of the
 “ family of sir William de Baude to the
 “ church, where it is received upon the
 “ steps of the high altar by the dean and
 “ chapter, attired in their sacred vest-
 “ ments, and crowned with garlands of
 “ roses. After being presented in form
 “ upon the altar to the saint, the body
 “ of the doe is, by this holy company,
 “ sent to the cook’s to be dressed for
 “ their dinner ; and the head being fixed
 “ upon a pole, is carried before the cross
 “ in procession round the church, till the
 “ cavalcade reach the west door, where
 “ stands the keeper, who immediately
 “ blows with his horn the death of the
 “ stag, and is answered by all the horns
 “ of the city ; the enlivening sounds of
 “ which

“ which must needs be very pleasing to
 “ the saint. The keeper is then presented
 “ with money for the dean and chapter,
 “ and a consecrated loaf, with St. Paul’s
 “ picture upon it, and dismissed.

“ Indeed,” continued the loquacious
 benedictine, “ you see London in the
 “ very worst time of the year for splen-
 “ did shows : upon the conversion of St.
 “ Paul, fifteen hundred tapers are lighted
 “ up in the church, and fifteen hundred
 “ poor people fed in the chapter-house-
 “ yard. Upon Christmas-day a boy
 “ from St. Paul’s school is elected bi-
 “ shop, who officiates that day as a pre-
 “ late : all the scholars are obliged to at-
 “ tend at the church to hear him preach ;
 “ and they must each of them give him a
 “ penny. But of all the diversions which
 “ London affords, none, in my opinion,
 “ equal the mysteries—they are plays
 “ made from some sacred story, and
 “ acted at Christmas, by the boys of St.

“ Paul’s; and at Whitsuntide, at St.
 “ John’s Clerkenwell, by all the parish
 “ clerks. It is not eight years ago that
 “ the last mentioned performed the crea-
 “ tion of the world; it took up eight days,
 “ and most of the nobility and gentry
 “ of England were spectators. But I
 “ have not shewn you the painting on
 “ the chapter house wall, the dance of
 “ death, which is thought wonderfully
 “ fine; there is a long train of all orders
 “ of mankind, from the pope to the
 “ beggar, with his partner death, sha-
 “ king his tremendous and warning
 “ hour-glass.”

Another day the benedictine took our
 heroine to view Westminster-abbey, that
 beautiful church dedicated to St. Peter.
 As they passed the Strand, Eleanor ad-
 mired the fine situation of the great men’s
 houses; which placed in a single range,
 and open to the water, with each a gar-
 den down to the margin of the river,
 adorned

adorned with obelisks, statues, and every decoration which taste and wealth could give, added infinite beauty and magnificence to the scene.

The benedictine pointed out to her observation the memorial which Edward the first had erected, of the place where the body of his beautiful and affectionate queen Eleanor of Castile rested, in the way to its interment ; it was called Charing-cross, and was a kind of obelisk, of an octagonal form, the upper stage ornamented with very fine statuary, eight beautiful female figures personifying the virtues of that princess ; whose magnificent tomb the benedictine shewed our heroine when they reached the abbey ; it was of the finest marble, in form of an altar, on which reclined the figure of the queen in copper, but gilt and burnished so highly, that it looked like solid gold. There Eleanor saw likewise the magnificent tomb of our third Edward, and his

queen Philippa ; that of the imprudent and unfortunate Richard, and his first wife Anne ; and also the costly one of our fifth Henry, on which was placed by his widow, Catharine of France, his image cut from heart of oak, and overlaid with the purest silver.

After viewing all the sepulchral curiosities, the monk and our heroine having performed their devotions, were permitted to view and kiss those sacred reliques which are deposited in that holy place : there were a piece of the veil of the ever-blessed Virgin ; and, enclosed in a small crystal vase, several drops of milk from her sacred breast : there was a whole blade-bone of the right-shoulder of St. Benedict, and half the left jaw-bone of St. Anastasia, a thumb of St. Alphage, and the entire head of St. Maxalla.

Our adventures, as well as her companion, being by this time considerably fatigued,

tigued, the benedictine procured some refreshment from an acquaintance in the cloisters, and they sat down upon a stone near one front of the church to rest themselves. The exquisite beauty of this inimitable Gothic structure attracted the extreme admiration of Eleanor, and she asked her conductor many questions concerning it. The monk was no niggard of his knowledge, and he readily acquainted her with as much of its history as his information reached.

“Where the church now stands,” said he, “my son, there stood in the days of our idolatrous ancestors, a temple to Apollo; which, when christianity began to dawn on the land, after a darkness which had overspread it from our Saxon conquerors, it pleased the Almighty to throw down by an earthquake. Sebert, then king of the west Saxons, had married a French princess; she was a christian, and indefa-

“ tifiable in her endeavours to convert
 “ her husband : some tremendous cir-
 “ cumstances which accompanied the de-
 “ molition of the temple, aided her pi-
 “ ous purpose ; the king was baptised,
 “ and on the spot where stood the temple
 “ to the heathen deity, he erected one to
 “ the worship of the true divinity, and
 “ declared his intention of dedicating it
 “ to St. Peter. This mark of respect
 “ highly pleased the saint ; it was the first
 “ compliment of the kind he had receiv-
 “ ed in England, and he determined to
 “ shew his satisfaction, by performing
 “ the ceremony of consecrating it him-
 “ self. When the church was finished,
 “ therefore, he descended from heaven ;
 “ but the night happening to be a very
 “ stormy one, and it being the first time
 “ of his visiting England, he mistook the
 “ side of the river on which the church
 “ was placed, and made his descent on
 “ the Surry side. This mistake was for-
 “ tunate for one Edric, a poor fisher-
 “ man,

“ man, whose cottage was near, for to
 “ him St. Peter disclosed himself; and
 “ he gladly undertook, though the storm
 “ was great, and his boat a mere cockle-
 “ shell, to waft him across the river.
 “ A host of angels were in the church
 “ ready to receive the saint; they had il-
 “ luminated it with innumerable wax ta-
 “ pers, and Edric saw through the win-
 “ dows, a blaze of light brighter than
 “ the noon-day sun. All due ceremonies
 “ were then performed, after which the
 “ angels flew back to heaven; but St.
 “ Peter chose to reward Edric by return-
 “ ing with him in his boat across the ri-
 “ ver, into which he ordered him to
 “ throw his nets; the man obeyed, and
 “ was astonished at a wonderful draught
 “ of salmon. The saint then commend-
 “ ing his readiness to oblige, told him
 “ this was a reward for it; and that he
 “ and his successors should never fail of
 “ such a draught, if they would puncti-
 “ liously give every tenth salmon to the
 E. 5. “ church

“ church they had just visited. St. Peter
 “ then took his leave, after commanding
 “ him to go the next morning to the bi-
 “ shop of Melitus, to inform him that
 “ there was no farther need of consecra-
 “ tion; and as a proof that he had him-
 “ self spared the prelate the trouble, he
 “ would find in the church the drop-
 “ pings of the wax tapers, and the chrism
 “ which had been used for the sacred oil.
 “ There the good bishop actually did
 “ find them, and displayed them to the
 “ astonished king, who ordered that they
 “ should be preserved in precious vessels,
 “ as memorials of the singular condescen-
 “ sion of St. Peter. Unhappily the
 “ church was burnt down, and these sa-
 “ cred reliques were destroyed with it, by
 “ those impious invaders the Danes. It
 “ was re-erected by Edgar, under the di-
 “ rection of the chaste St. Dunstan. Fall-
 “ ing afterwards into decay, it was lastly
 “ re-built by that pious and continent
 “ prince, Edward the confessor, to whose
 “ wisdom

“ wisdom England is indebted for the
 “ compilation of its laws, and the sanc-
 “ tity of whose touch cured the distemper-
 “ ed of the scrophula.”

Having now rested and refreshed themselves, the benedictine and Eleanor looked into Westminster-hall, an immense room built by Richard the second, who, after it was finished, kept his Christmas there in 1399, entertaining with his usual profusion ten thousand people, by whom were devoured each day, twenty-eight oxen, and three hundred sheep, besides fowls, and other delicacies out of number.

These visits, as well as many others to different churches and convents, were made by Eleanor for the gratification of her curiosity ; but there was one visit she wished to make in consequence of her vow on the night of her departure from Longueville castle. In the church of

Allhallows Barking, was an image of the blessed Virgin, so highly venerated, that pilgrimages were made to it from all parts of the kingdom, and an indulgence of forty days given to all those who visited it. It was erected by Edward the first, when prince, in consequence of a vision, admonishing him so to do; and giving him an assurance that if he had such an image formed, and visited it punctually, five times a year, he should be victorious over all nations, particularly Scotland and Wales.

To this holy image of the Virgin, Eleanor determined to pay her vowed honours; the benedictine was again her conductor, and prostrate at the feet of the consecrated representative, her heart sent forth its grateful effusion of prayer and praise to the divine original. The diamond cross was presented; and after going through all due forms, and reward-
ing

ing liberally the priests for their attendance, our heroine left the sacred place, with a heart lightened by the consciousness of having performed a duty.

CHAP. XIII.

EAGER to establish his assumed title, by finally crushing the Lancastrian party, Edward, and his indefatigable friend, Warwick, were by this time ready to meet Margaret, who, though she infused aversion and terror into the city of London, and, indeed, into all the southern provinces by her cruelty, and the licence in which she indulged her troops; yet on the northern, to which she had returned, that expected licence and plunder, added to the universal rancour which pervaded all ranks of both parties against each other, which made them not only forget that their opponents were their countrymen, but taught them to regard them as their bitterest enemies; that sanction of violence that gratified at once their

avarice

avarice and revenge, brought multitudes to her standard, and so quickly and powerfully recruited her army, that she was as eager as Edward to meet in the field.

Impelled thus by one desire, Margaret from the north, with thirty thousand men, and Edward from London with forty thousand, met each other at Touton, in Yorkshire.

No one can be ignorant of the event of that decisive day, so fatal to the house of Lancaster. Long and bloody was the contest, thirty-six thousand Englishmen, slain by their brethren, strewed the plain of Touton with their dead bodies. The heads of the duke of York and the earl of Salisbury were taken from the gates of York ; but not to be outdone in horrible spectacles by the opposite party, they were replaced by others of distinguished nobility.

Having

Having now nothing to apprehend from Margaret, who, with her son and Henry, were fled into Scotland, Edward determined to summon a parliament to settle his government; and in the interim, till it should meet, he accepted the pressing invitation of Warwick, to accompany him into Westmorland, on a visit to his family.

With a grand retinue, Edward and his brothers, Gloucester and Clarence; attended by St. Julian, Philip, and our heroine, left York with the earl of Warwick, and arrived at Malarstang castle, where their reception befitted their high rank.

The countess of Warwick, though her beauty was now in its wane, remained graceful and amiable; her daughters were infinitely charming; nor did the fair Elizabeth Lucie, then on a visit to the castle, yield to either of the young ladies in loveliness.

After

After paying every due honour to their amiable hostess, the eyes of the three princes found irresistible attractions in the younger part of the company; and it seemed in the choice each made, as if a parity of years was requisite to form the sympathy of love; for the duke of Gloucester, then about seventeen, attached himself to the almost infantine charms of the lovely giddy Anne, the youngest daughter of Warwick; the duke of Clarence, who was about a year older, became deeply enamoured of the blooming Isabel the eldest; whilst the amorous and voluptuous Edward felt more inclination for the ripened beauties of Elizabeth.

Nor could the fair Elizabeth remain insensible to the charms of her royal lover, then in his twenty-second year, and the handsomest man in England. Alas! she knew not that those charms had already been too seductive of the female heart: she was ignorant that under that
 enchant-

enchanting softness of address, that bewitching tenderness of manner, lurked an unfeeling and cruel soul; that he spoke but to deceive; that his vows of eternal love were made and broken with equal facility.

George of Clarence yielded to his brother alone in beauty of person: but deficient in Edward's softness of manners, he possessed more real tenderness of heart; he was less amiable, but he was more sincere. He felt acutely; he was as little able to conceal as to repress his feelings; prudence should sometimes have taught him the one, and reason the other, but not possessing a superabundant share of either, he was generally impelled to action by the caprice of the moment; and the honesty of his nature, the warmth of his passions, and the hasty decision of his judgement, rendered his conduct unstable and inconsistent, for he was constantly liable to be duped by the superior artifice of others.

He

He was sincerely in love with Isabel ; with transport perceived the passion reciprocal ; and with all the honest openness of his character, made overtures to her father, who could form no other objection to the union than the extreme youth of the parties, and upon that account only was the marriage postponed, to the mortification of the impatient lover.

Historians have been copious in their descriptions of the person, and the character of Gloucester : in his character it is impossible to be mistaken, for that is sufficiently elucidated by his actions. But it is with great reason doubted by many if his person was as disgusting as is generally represented ; and whether detestation of his heart, did not heighten every natural imperfection, and prejudice caricature a countenance not beautiful, and a shape void of grace, into an ugliness of deformity infinitely beyond the truth.

He

He certainly was not near so handsome as his two elder brothers ; for they resembled their mother, who was the greatest beauty of the age, as Richard did his father, who, though not remarkable for personal graces, was neither ugly nor deformed.

Early conscious of his inferiority, and possessing from nature an understanding superior to both, Richard sought to distinguish himself by mental beauties : but unhappily possessing more judgement in discriminating what was amiable, than goodness of heart to impel him seriously to become so, he found it much easier to assume the appearance of virtue, than to acquire virtues ; to wear an air of blunt frankness, than to be sincere ; to drop a tear on hearing a tale of distress, than to feel compassion for the unfortunate. He laughed and romped with the spirited and giddy Anne ; and much more penetrating eyes than her's did not perceive under

der the appearance of careless and sportive humour, a heart cold to all interests but his own, and torn by every malevolent passion.

Yet hypocrite as he was in other respects, he was sincere in his love for Anne; such love as hearts like his could feel—selfish—such as the epicure possesses for a delicious morsel. His love remained latent in his soul amidst the predominance of ambition, and was at last gratified after the death of her first husband, the son of Henry, whom Richard and his brothers cruelly murdered. But his passion satiated, self-interest, ever the predominant principle, becoming the enemy of Anne, she fell a sacrifice to his endeavours to strengthen his tottering throne by a marriage with his niece, Edward's eldest daughter. That Anne felt an early predilection for Gloucester, can alone account for her accepting him as a husband under all the circumstances which should have

have forbidden an union. So difficult, perhaps impossible is it, to eradicate from the heart the early impressions made there by the passions.

The most noble and sincere of men, the frank and open-hearted Warwick, fond of the progeny of his friend, and alive to their interest, caressed them all with unbounded affection; little suspecting that the eldest meditated the seduction of his niece; and unable to foresee, that the younger would plunge into the deepest misery his two beloved daughters. Happy blindness of futurity!—but for thee, how would the felicity of the present moment be swallowed up in the bitter anticipation of future evils!

In this desirable ignorance, mutually pleased and pleasing, the hours glided swiftly over the heads of Warwick and his royal guests; and business, faction, war, were forgotten in the charming re-

treat. The spring was forward and lovely; they sometimes rambled through the gardens and woods, sometimes walked to the neighbouring villages, sometimes made excursions on horseback into the adjacent country, and in the evening they listened to the melodious voice of our minstrel, or danced to the sound of a variety of musical instruments.

But all in this society were not happy alike: Philip would often bemoan to our heroine in the confidence of friendship, his hapless love; bitterly regret the flight of Eleanor, and generously vow, that if he could discover her, his intention was to re-instate her in the honours of her family, and leave her without constraint to her own determination, to reward or neglect his disinterested affection.

But far different the found was the conduct of St. Julian: she discovered that he had solicited and obtained of the king
a con-

a confirmation of his father's grant to him of the wardship of Eleanor, a reiterated command to take Philip as her husband, enabling him to assume the dignity of her family ; or in case she was discovered to be dead, St. Julian was empowered to seize her domain.

These were arbitrary proceedings, but they were lawless times ; and Eleanor found, unless she could determine to marry Philip, it behoved her to be more careful than ever of discovery. But though he had much advanced himself in her esteem, her affection for him was not yet sufficient to overcome the aversion she felt for his father, and she determined to remain in her present situation, which was now grown tolerably comfortable ; for as she became more known by her frequent conversations with the different parts of this society, they discovered, that admirable as were her musical talents, they were still less extraordinary than her
 mental

mental accomplishments ; that the most lively and sparkling wit was united to the most nicely discriminating judgement, and an information beyond the promise of her years. They were charmed also with her elegant manners, and the propriety and modesty of her conduct. She now was always desired to make one in their parties, and no pleasure was thought perfect unless she partook it.

But among the ladies, no one distinguished her so much as lady Elizabeth Lucie, who being herself a proficient in music, better understood her merit in that science ; and whose understanding, superior to, and more mature than her companions, enabled her more readily to discern the exquisite beauties of Eleanor's mind.

Eleanor's heart was not deficient in a reciprocal affection for the charming Lucie, who was as amiable in mind as

lovely in person ; and whose conduct would have been as faultless as her face, had not one baneful passion—ambition—intruded into her heart. The idea of being queen captivated her soul, as much as the accomplishments of the gallant and gay Edward ; and the dazzling image blinded and led astray her better reason.

That insidious youth, amidst the most ardent vows of everlasting passion, the most solemn asseverations of honourable love, never failed to inculcate the absolute necessity of keeping their mutual attachment from the knowledge of Warwick, who was extremely solicitous that he should, by a foreign powerful alliance, strengthen himself on the throne ; and Edward declared that he dared not, in the present unsettled state of public affairs, run counter to the advice of a person, who, by his own abilities, his vast popularity, and extensive interest, was

as

as able to dethrone him, as to raise him to royalty.

These plausible reasons were sufficient to silence the pride of Elizabeth, which at first revolted at listening to a clandestine address; and as to prevent their frequent meetings from being perceived by the rest of the family, it was necessary to have the assistance of some one whom they could trust, Elizabeth's partiality to our heroine induced her to make her the confidante.

Eleanor, unacquainted with the licentious principles of Edward, believing his professions of honourable love sincere for so charming a woman, who would have given lustre to the diadem of an empire; and thinking his reasons prudent for wishing it to remain a secret at present: supposing also, that though the disinterested and generous spirit of Warwick would prefer the political benefit of Ed-

ward to any accumulation of honour on his own family, yet that he would not be mortally offended at seeing his niece on the throne, she determined that no good offices of her's should be wanting toward realising the splendid prosperity of her friend, in whom she intended to repose a reciprocal confidence, and by her interest with Edward, crush the grasping schemes of St. Julian, and procure herself to be re-instated in her family fortune, and honours.

For the purpose of teaching the young ladies on the harp, without interruption, Eleanor had a small, but exceedingly pleasant room assigned her, apart from the family, which had a door into a private garden. Elizabeth, who played incomparably on the guiterne, expressed a wish to lady Warwick that the minstrel might be permitted to teach her on the harp. In consequence of this request, at a certain hour, when the greatest part of the family

family were engaged, and the young ladies had received their lessons, Elizabeth visited our heroine, and Edward having procured the key which opened a little gate out of that garden into a grove, met her there: the door into the house was then locked, to prevent the intrusion of impertinent visitors, and Eleanor walking in the garden left the lovers to themselves.

But though not in their immediate presence, yet as she was never far distant, the minstrel was an effectual check to the impetuosity of Edward; he was therefore obliged to be content with the advantages he had gained, and wait for an opportunity more favourable to his wishes: he had pressed lady Warwick to bring her blooming family to court; and amidst its gaieties and amusements, he hoped to divert the watchful eyes which surrounded Elizabeth.

The lovers had met several times in this manner with perfect security ; but on the day preceding that on which the royal brothers were to return to London, lady Warwick, wanting to say something to Elizabeth, and knowing it was her hour of visiting the minstrel, went to Eleanor's apartment to speak to her there. She was surprised at not being able to open the door ; she rapt, and heard a bustle within, which evidently increased on her calling loud to have it opened : indeed, her voice had so alarmed Eleanor's guests, that they scarcely knew what they did. Edward flew into the garden, called to Eleanor to join lady Elizabeth, and escaped at the gate ; whilst Elizabeth, with trembling fingers, hampered, instead of turning back the lock, and her trepidation was the greater, as lady Warwick expressed her impatience in a pretty high voice.

At

At length the door was opened ; but nothing could exceed the rage of the countess at the suspicious circumstance, and the extreme confusion evident on Elizabeth's and Eleanor's countenances, which she with the utmost appearance of reason construed into conscious guilt : she poured on them a torrent of reproaches. Elizabeth threw herself at her feet in tears, and with a thousand asseverations of innocence, endeavoured to exculpate herself and her companion. The countess a little softened, and sensible of the dangers of disclosing so disgraceful an affair, appeared to believe her, but strictly forbade any future visits, under the penalty of discovering the matter to the earl.

This was a promise which Elizabeth readily made, for the absence of Edward would render the pretence of seeing the minstrel unnecessary ; and the rest of the day was so occupied in preparation

for the departure of her lord, that lady Warwick had no leisure to reflect upon what at the moment gave her so much pain.

The three royal brothers the next morning, with almost equal reluctance, took their slow leave of the fair inhabitants of Malarstang castle, accompanied by their noble host, St. Julian, and his son : the two latter purposing, after giving Edward their voice in parliament, to retire to Northamptonshire, and commence a strict inquiry after Eleanor : they had procured a mandate from the king to search any convent where it was suspected she was concealed, giving as a reason for the violation of that sanctuary, that she was in the wardship of the crown, to which she had proved herself refractory, and also a command to the abbess of such convent, to give her up to the royal authority.

C H A P. XIV.

AFTER the departure of her royal guests, the countess of Warwick had leisure to reflect on the strange incident of the preceding day. The circumstance of two young people, of different sexes, being locked up together in a private apartment, and the confusion apparent in their countenances and manner, appeared to her in so suspicious a light, that though she affected to believe their asseverations of innocence, she thought it of the utmost importance to watch them with the closest attention; though at the same time she put on an air of confidence in both, as if she had entirely forgotten the affair.

This apparent good humour and freedom from distrust had its intended effect;

the young people became unguarded, and she perceived a secret intelligence in their eyes and manner. The letters from the king to Elizabeth were to be sent under cover to the minstrel. A courier had arrived late one evening, and Eleanor did not receive her letters till the family were separated for the night. She knew Elizabeth's impatience, but there was no opportunity of seeing her in private, and she dared not make a servant the messenger; Eleanor was therefore obliged to whisper the intelligence to the fair Lucie, when they assembled to breakfast, and slip the letter into her hand, when she thought the general attention otherwise engaged.

Neither the whisper nor the action were unperceived by the watchful countess; prompt and decisive, she in the instant formed her resolution, without permitting her indignation, by a word or look, to be visible.

Impa-

Impatient to read her letter, Elizabeth retired, the moment breakfast was ended. The countess then withdrew, and sent one of the officers of the household, on whose fidelity she could rely, to the minstrel's apartment, to signify to her, that the countess had no farther need of her services, and commanded her to depart the castle immediately. By this man, notwithstanding her resentment, the generosity of the countess sent a handsome present of money for the immediate subsistence of our heroine, but strictly ordered him not to lose sight of her, till she was some way from the castle gates, and not to suffer her to see or speak to any one of the family.

Her orders were obeyed with scrupulous exactness; and without any of the family suspecting her dismissal, much less the cause of it, the astonished and grieved Eleanor, who an hour before thought herself secure of an honourable

asylum, till she was enabled to claim from St. Julian her own fortune, now found herself once more an outcast from society, condemned to wander in a wild and mountainous country, very thinly inhabited, where she knew not a single creature out of the family she had been with, and was totally unacquainted with the situation of the towns and villages.

It was about noon in a cloudless day in June, when Eleanor left the castle. The height and fierceness of the sun induced her, as she had no particular plan, to direct her steps to that part of the country which promised her in the distant view most shade. After a long fatiguing walk over a burning plain, she reached the confines of an immense wood; and throwing herself at the foot of a spreading oak, ruminated on the conduct it would be best for her to pursue.

After

After much thinking, she found that her situation could be connected with no regular system; that a desultory, unsettled, wandering life seemed destined to be her portion. She appeared to be thrown upon the hand of chance, and her heart involuntarily lifted itself in prayer to that great Being, who governs chance and accident as instruments of his own good providence; who has promised to be the father of the orphan, and the guardian of those who have none to help them.

The heat increasing, the deep umbrage of the forest invited her into its closest paths; where, delighted with that refreshing shade, which shut out the scorching sun-beams, and cast the pleasing gloom of evening over the glaring hours of mid-day; listening to the interrupted responsive notes of the birds, who, like herself, had taken shelter from the heat, and were hopping in the under-wood,

wood, she walked on for some time, supposing that the path she was in, though intricate and winding, would at length conduct her through ; and as the wood was very extensive, to a part of the country distant from that by which she entered.

After having pressed on thus a long while, the strength of her limbs began to fail : she found herself faint with hunger, as well as fatigue. She was still in the mid-wood shade, without perceiving any end to her walk ; for the path seemed to wind back upon itself. She sighed and blamed her own imprudence, which, to avoid the inconvenience of the heat, had engaged her in a toilsome, uncertain, and perhaps dangerous peregrination ; for she reflected, that either in this vast wood she was shut out from the world, without means of recruiting her exhausted strength, to enable her to trace its winding way ; or if it had inhabitants, they were

were probably of a kind most to be shunned, ruffians—banditti.—“ Thus,” said she to herself, “ will it ever be, “ when we giddily yield to the impulse “ of the present moment, and inconsiderately snatch at present pleasures, “ without reflecting on their fatal consequences !”

Still she walked forward, though slowly, and almost despairing of reaching the end of the wood, when a beautiful glade which the path crossed, invited her to repose her weary limbs on the dark green grass. The cool sequestered scenery of the glade was charming; and the cooings of a stock-dove at a little distance soothed her melancholy by its plaintive sounds. She listened—it ceased for a time : then, as if struck by some cruel remembrance, in a louder tone it resumed its plaint, and made the air resound with its note of sorrow.

A note

A note so responsive to her own feelings, affected Eleanor : “ Poor bird !” said she, “ hath some cruel archer rendered thee, like me, solitary and friendless ?”

She touched her harp—its strings vibrated to the sensations that oppressed her heart ; their melody was solemn, plaintive, affecting, whilst her fine eyes swimming in tears were lifted to heaven.—Suddenly the rustling of leaves disturbed this luxury of grief ; and to her unspeakable consternation, she saw a man breaking his way to her, through the thick-woven branches of the trees.

Her fright, however, was in a few moments dissipated, on a nearer view of its object, which was much better calculated to inspire veneration than terror—it was a hermit, who had been listening to the impassioned sounds of her harp, and
 whose

whose curiosity impelled him to a nearer view.

He greeted her in the gentlest terms, inquired what chance had conducted her to that unfrequented spot; and on hearing the reasons which Eleanor thought proper to assign, offered her an asylum in his hermitage, as long as she chose to reside there: he said it had several cells, one of which was occupied by a hermit much older than himself.

A hermitage had few charms for Eleanor, but any thing was better than sleeping in the forest, and she with expressions of gratitude, accepted the good father's offer and guidance; he assuring her that his residence was not more than two miles distance, though he confessed the path was rugged and uncouth; and after this little rest, she thought herself very able to undertake this farther walk.

By

By a straiter path than that which Eleanor had taken, they soon found themselves on the outside of the wood, but nothing could be more frightful and desolate than the appearance of the country which they entered : our heroine saw nothing before her but lofty and desert mountains, or rather rocks, thrown together as it were by the hand of discord, and laid waste by the piercing blasts of the north ; their brown heads lost in the clouds, and their sides, to appearance, inaccessible to all but the winged tribe.

The hermit conducted Eleanor, who was wondering how they were to scale the declivities, to a kind of path which ran along the side of an almost perpendicular mountain : above them enormous projections of ragged rock hung over their heads, and threatened to crush them : far below a rapid torrent tumbled headlong over its rocky bed, and foaming, bellowing, excited a terror in the soul

foul which language cannot describe. Not a single shrub, not a blade of grass by its verdure enlivened the dreary waste, but the whole mountain appeared one vast blasted rock.

With palpitating heart our trembling minstrel followed the steps of the hermit, wishing every moment she had remained in the forest, and again blaming her own inconsideration; but it was now too late to recede, and the father often turned to exhort her to courage. Courage, however, is never the effect of reason; and if it were, the terrors of the path would have far outweighed all the good father's arguments. Eleanor was just sinking with extreme fatigue, and increasing horrors, when by a sudden winding, she found herself entering a valley, which by the contrast of the way which led to it, appeared an elysium.

This

This charming valley was about a mile in diameter, and of a circular form ; surrounded by stupendous mountains, whose tops towards the north and east were lost in the clouds, as if to shut from it the keen and blighting winds of those points ; but towards the south and west, their heads were lowered, by which the enlivening beams of the sun had freer admittance ; and the sides of these mountains by their singular contrast heightened the beauty of the scenery.

Those, the aspect of whose declivities were denied the all-prolific ray, exhibited a picture of desolation, a dreary waste of naked rocks, and tremendous precipices : yet had this scene its peculiar decoration ; from about the middle of one division of the mountain, trickled a rill of the purest water, which, meandering in a labyrinth of a thousand windings down the sides, and accumulating in its course, at length reached the bottom, where,
gliding

gliding away in a silvery stream, it about the middle of the valley spread itself into a beautiful lake.

From another part of the mountain, a sheet of water was precipitated from the top, in an impetuous torrent down the steep; and falling from rock to rock, flashing, whitening, foaming, formed a cascade infinitely sublime, which dashed on the rocky bottom, rose high in a mist, and then falling again in a perpetual shower, its raging wave ran off amidst the shaggy rocks and scattered fragments, with maddening rapidity, till it reached the lake, and then passed with fury through that placid stream, into the passage between the mountains, by which our adventurers entered.

But the sides of these mountains which hung towards the sun, were smiling with a lovely verdure, and glowing with a thousand tints of blooming shrubs and
climb-

climbers ; while among them the honeysuckle and sweet briar perfumed the air with their sweets. The valley carpeted with the richest emerald, the borders of the lake adorned with a profusion of aquatic plants and flowers, the whole scenery so delightful, so unexpected, its beauties so heightened by its dreary and tremendous entrance, so astonished Eleanor, that she uttered a loud exclamation of mingled pleasure and surprise, which gladdened the heart of her benevolent conductor.

“ I am charmed,” said he, “ at perceiving you so sensible of the beauties of this sequestered spot. Shut out from the world and its solitudes, I and my companion reside here in primeval simplicity. The sides of the rock are scoopt into large recesses, and caverns, which afford habitations not incommodious ; the lake affords us fish, which would delight the epicure ; its pure stream

“ stream a beverage more wholesome
 “ than the vintage ; and the luxuriant
 “ soil of the valley many pleasant and
 “ healthful vegetables.—But here comes
 “ my friend : he is without doubt much
 “ surprised to see I have a companion,
 “ let me lead you towards him.” He did
 so ; and addressing him by the name of
 father Anthony, presented the minstrel,
 with a short history of their meeting.

Father Anthony scarcely heard him,
 for he was intently gazing on the face of
 Eleanor. “ Have I not seen thee be-
 “ fore ?” he said, at last ; “ Didst thou
 “ not lose thyself in Northumberland,
 “ near the sea, in company with the son
 “ of Henry ?”

“ I did,” replied Eleanor, “ looking
 “ in her turn upon him : and surely you
 “ are the good father to whose hospitality
 “ we were so much indebted.”

“ I as-

“I assuredly am; and I account it a
 “happiness. I will not inquire what
 “misfortune can have driven one so
 “young from the haunts of cheerful so-
 “ciety, but most welcome shalt thou be
 “to partake with brother Mathias and
 “myself the pleasures of this peaceful
 “vale.”

“Our young companion is fatigued,”
 said father Mathias, “perhaps hungry
 “also; let us conduct him where he may
 “rest his feeble and trembling limbs,
 “and I will dress some newly caught fish
 “for his refreshment.”

Eleanor was ushered into a hollow, or
 rather a dent in the verdant part of the
 mountain, which the honey-suckle and
 sweet-briar over hanging in front, had
 wildly formed into a bower, and nature
 lined with its own vegetable arras, the
 green soft moss. At a little distance
 glittered the chrystal lake: opposite tum-
 bled

bled the foaming cascade : the sun was setting, and a soft and pleasing gloom spread itself over the landscape.

Whilst father Mathias was preparing our heroine's supper in a cave near, which served as a kitchen, she conversed with father Anthony ; for weary and exhausted as she was, she thought it right to endeavour by a cheerful countenance and animated conversation, to requite the benevolence of her venerable companions, and testify her gratitude for their hospitality. Yet the attention with which the father beheld her, the eager avidity with which he caught her words, and the distracted manner in which he answered, surprised her greatly ; and she felt relieved when father Mathias appeared with some very well-boiled fish.

By the time the supper was ended, the dazzling light of day had given place to the mild beam of the moon, which rising

above the tops of the mountains, threw a softened radiance over the beautiful scenery of the valley: a thousand nightingales were warbling their evening song, and the fathers solicited the minstrel to join her harp with the melodious concert of nature.

Eleanor readily complied, for she felt that it would be much more pleasing to her to play, than converse, where she was nearly the only speaker; where she was attended to with an avidity which embarrassed her; and where she evidently awakened in both their minds some disagreeable remembrances, for their answers were generally accompanied with sighs; and it was more than once, that father Anthony had started from his seat, as if struck by some sudden pang, walked a few hasty turns in the valley, and then resumed his former posture.

She

She swept her fingers over the harp— a thousand reverberations from the hollow of the rocks, like so many other instruments broke on the ear, and destroyed the harmony. She joined her voice, but its sound, as well as sweetness, was lost in the clamour of the echoes, and deafened more than delighted : she was constrained to desist, and she entreated to be shewn to a place of repose.

She was conducted by her venerable host to a cavern, where was a bed of soft and fragrant moss ; and both giving her a fervent benediction, took their leave.

But her lodging-room and couch had, in her ideas, much more of novelty than pleasure or convenience to recommend them. The door could scarcely have secured her from the intrusion of any animals that inhabited the mountains ; much less, as there was no fastening, could it exclude her companions, and she dread-

ed sleeping, left their curiosity, of which they seemed to possess such abundant share, should bring them to her bed-side ere she woke in the morning; besides this, the materials of which her bed was composed, by no means invited her to undress: she threw herself in her cloaths upon it, because unable any longer to sit up; but had immediately in her imagination a million of insects crawling upon her.

When she endeavoured to exclude these unpleasing ideas, those of more importance, more painful, took their place—the hermits were venerable, and seeming good men; yet their extreme attention, their embarrassing gaze, displeased her—it might be excess of their hospitality, their ardent wish to serve her, yet she would have preferred the most rustic and unceremonious civility. The more she reflected on their manner, the more repugnance she felt to remain with them: there

there was something she thought in their eyes and air, particularly in those of father Mathias, which was at variance with their character.—“ Perhaps,” said she, after long thinking, “ they are banditti “ disguised in this holy habit.”——She started up at this supposition ; a thousand tumultuous imaginations succeeded : their manner led her to suppose they suspected her to be a woman—this thought was decisive of her conduct—she resolved to leave this dangerous place immediately—the path by the edge of the precipice, and overhanging the torrent, was no longer tremendous.

Supposing the hermits were by this time retired to their cells, which she knew were so situated that she had not to pass them, she tied on her harp, and stepping softly a little beyond the entrance of the cavern, she hearkened attentively, but could hear no sound except

the wild dash of the water. With quick and light steps she passed the valley, and reached the winding path through the mountain ; the broad and cloudless moon affording her a light as sufficient for her peregrination as the meridian sun. She re-passed the formidable way without terror, and again found herself in the skirts of the forest, which she did not chuse to enter, lest she should again lose herself in its winding paths, but traced along its edge, so delighted at having escaped all the dangers which her imagination had painted in the valley, that she scarcely thought of the real ones of her houseless, and friendless situation.

At length she perceived a great road cross her path, which she concluded led to some town. Pleased to find herself once more in the haunts of social beings, and by this time extremely fatigued, she

stept

stept among a cluster of close-growing trees by the road side, and laying herself down on the grass, insensibly fell into a profound sleep.

C H A P. XV.

THE sun was advanced some height, ere Eleanor started from her singular couch by the road side. Her dress was soon adjusted, but the sound of a horse's feet alarmed her, and she squatted again into her place, as a hare into its form.

The horse drew slowly nearer. His rider seized either with a sudden fit of devotion, or a desire to entertain himself, began in a deep bass voice to roar the matin song to the virgin.

Pleased with a subject which was in unison with her own heart, Eleanor nicely touched her harp in accompaniment; the man who had a better ear than voice, surprised and charmed, stopped; and
after

after the hymn was ended, entered into conversation.

After having replied to his questions in what manner she thought proper, she soon learned that he was an itinerant ecclesiastic ; a travelling vender of pardons and indulgencies from the pope. He took care to inform her that he was but lately returned from a pilgrimage to Rome ; and as a token of it, shewed her a miniature picture of Christ, which was sewn into his cap, and which he assured her, was an exact copy of one which was miraculously imprinted on a handkerchief, and preserved in St. Peter's church. He also informed her, that the bag he carried so carefully before him, contained pardons and indulgences, which he had himself imported fresh and new from the pope's own hands ; as also a great number of most valuable and sacred reliques. He said he was going to a large town a few miles off, where he meant to preach

the next day, which was Sunday, and that if she was going the same way, he should be glad of her company.

Eleanor not knowing how otherwise to dispose of herself, and unacquainted with the country, accepted his offer ; he rode slowly on, and she walked by the horse's side, while they beguiled in cheerful conversation the tedious way.

Eleanor by this intercourse of sentiment, discovered him to be a man of strong understanding, who had seen much of the world, was well versed in its customs, perfectly acquainted with mankind, with an open and keen eye to their foibles and prejudices ; of which upon a farther knowledge of him she perceived, he could with consummate art avail himself for his own emolument.

As the day advanced, our adventurers found they stood in need of some refreshment :

ment: a large farm-house was in sight, to which they bent their course; father Simon assuring our heroine of a welcome under his auspices.

The itinerant alighted from his horse; tied it to a post, took his bag in his hand, and walked into the house, followed by Eleanor, who touched her harp as she entered the door; they found the family sitting round a large table, plentifully spread with homely viands, but good of their kind, and cleanly in their appearance..

After a little flourish with the harp, by which the minstrel announced herself; father Simon in a long harangue made known *his* profession, and exhorted them with much energy to take this happy opportunity of purging their souls from all the guilt they had ever contracted; or if they could afford to purchase such indul-

G 6

gences;

gences, all they should contract for several years to come.

The effect of this speech was very great upon its hearers : the morsel half-lifted to the mouth, stopt in its course, and hovered in mid-air ; whilst the mouth which was opened to receive it, continued in that position, as if to take in the more desirable food of promise which the father offered them, and their eyes, opened to the utmost extent of their lids, gazed with staring wonder.

At length they were desired to sit down and partake the meal ; and after it was finished, whilst Eleanor entertained the children with her harp, father Simon found an excellent market for his pardons : all were desirous of washing their consciences free from offence, and the servants as well as their principals crowded round him, exchanging for his precious merchandize all the money they possessed ;

fed : the women also giving besides their small cash, the few valuables they had, such as broches, thumb-rings, &c. and and he sold a relique to the farmer which was to preserve his sheep from the rot, for a weighty consideration.

He placed with solemnity all their names in his tablets, which he assured them was a sacred register, and would infallibly be copied into the book of life : thus laden with the spoils of the credulous family, he took his leave, as also did Eleanor.

But no sooner were they out of sight, than father Simon took his tablets from his bosom, and with a triumphant laugh at his own ingenuity, rubbed out every one of their names. Having swallowed several horns of the farmer's ale, which banished all reserve, he conversed with the most unrestrained freedom ; and Eleanor, who was disgusted at his hypocrisy,

crisy, when he was amongst his penitents, was now greatly shocked at his avowed impiety.

The country was thinly inhabited, and the sun was declining before they reached another house, and that was only a poor cottage, where the father of a numerous family lay sick, and every thing round wore an aspect of extreme want. The rapacity of the itinerant was here likely to remain unsatisfied, but yet as the most abject generally hold *something* they deem precious in reserve, which the deepest distress can scarcely wring from them, he did not despair; but seating himself by the bed-side of the poor sick man, whose spirits were lowered at once by want and disease, he preached on the heinous nature of sin, enumerating its various kinds, and in his catalogue placing even the natural infirmities of human nature: he then expatiated very copiously, and painted very vividly, the dreadful
punish-

punishments which awaited it in another life. And having thus awakened the remorse of the wretched object before him, and alarmed his fears, he next set before him the blessed effects of those indulgences and absolutions he had to dispose of, in so strong a light, that the poor man was convinced he must be eternally miserable without one.

But what was to be done?—money he had none—goods none that were portable—his children were crying to him for bread, and these precious absolutions were not to be had gratis. “Given without *some* compensation,” said father Simon, extolling the compassion and tenderness of his heart;—“given for nothing,” said he, with a deep sigh, “it would avail you nothing; such is the decree of his holiness the pope; otherwise, God knows my pity for you, you should freely have my whole flock, much as they cost me; for
— what

“what are the riches of this transitory
 “world, what all its most splendid pos-
 “sessions when compared with the ever-
 “lasting happiness of one precious
 “soul?”

A melancholy silence ensued. “Alas!
 “father,” sobbing, said the woman,
 “what is to be done to save my dear
 “husband?”

“You have a wedding ring on your
 “finger.”

Her eyes filled with tears, she looked
 mournfully on the poor sick man, “It
 “was the pledge,” said she, with a deep
 sigh, “of my husband’s love in his hap-
 “pier days.”

“And thou givest it now,” said the
 father, “as a proof of thy constant affec-
 “tion in the days of his wretchedness.”

She

She put her thumb and her finger upon it, and drew it slowly and reluctantly from its place.

The poor man eagerly eyed her—he sunk on his pillow with a deep sigh; “Alas! my wife,” he cried, “what is the possession of any earthly good, when put in the scale against eternal happiness?”

She snatched it hastily off, and was giving it to the father, when Eleanor with her spread hand put it back.—“Put it on,” she said, “and take this money, which will procure peace to your husband, and provision for your children.”

The woman eyed the gift which she held open in her hand, with eager transport; she fell at the feet of the minstrel—but her rapture was too great for words, she even in that moment of joy forgot her

her ring—then recollecting it, she thrust it on her finger with an expression on her countenance of such unutterable pleasure, as delighted the benevolent soul of her benefactress. She gave a piece of money to the father, heard with ecstasy the absolution and benediction pronounced on her husband, kissed with unaffected fervour the holy reliques ; and then expressed so much impatience to be gone, to procure something comfortable for her husband, who much needed it, and some food for her half-starved children, that our adventurers, who did not wish to detain her, finding she was going to the same town where father Simon meant to preach the next day, determined she should serve them as a guide thither, and taking a hasty leave of the good man, they all departed.

—Eleanor found some difficulty in keeping pace with the hurried steps of their guide, in the two miles they had to walk.

At

At length they reached the town, and the woman conducted them to the best inn, where Eleanor calling for some wine, made her drink a little herself, and gave her a bottle for her husband, together with some cordial confections which the hostess procured.

The hostess of this inn was a widow, a jolly rosy dame, whose leering eye gave no sublime ideas of her modesty. Father Simon ogled her with great freedom, and she was by no means backward in returning the compliment : supper was served to our adventurers, and Eleanor being greatly fatigued, soon retired to her apartment.

The next morning being Sunday, they all rose pretty early ; father Simon prepared himself to preach with spirit, by some hearty draughts of strong ale, after his cold chine ; so that if he was not absolutely

tolutely intoxicated, it must be confessed he was very near it.

Eleanor followed him to church, accompanied by the hostess, who in her Sunday habiliments made no ordinary appearance. Her gown and her stockings were of scarlet; her shoes sharply piqued at the toes, and laced high on the ankles; her *chemise* as white as milk, was plaited into a black silk collar, and fastened at the breast with a brooch almost as large as a buckler; her broad girdle was of striped silk, at which hung a leather purse, with silk tassels, and ornamented with brass in the shape of pearls; her head-cloaths were large and full, with a black fillet and tapes; and she wore a large hat to preserve her complexion from the weather.

Behind her walked her tapster, in his best cloaths, and red stockings; and desirous of being particularly well dressed, he

he wore his tippet bound about his head instead of a cap.

Father Simon ascended the pulpit without the ceremony of asking the leave of the parish priest; but as a justification of his intrusion, he immediately displayed his bulls, with the seal of the pope on them: thus shewing his warrant for preaching, that, as he said, no man, either priest or lay-man, might disturb him in Christ's holy work.

Prayers being ended, and the offertory sung, he stood forth in the pulpit to give the sermon.

After a grand flourish of bulls and popes, bishops and cardinals, patriarchs and St. Peter, interlarded with some latin sentences, to make the people stare at his learning, he began a warm declamation against those two crying and detestable sins, avarice and intemperance;

proving by sad examples, both from sacred and prophane history, their fatal tendency to the subversion of every virtue, to be the inlet of every vice. He shewed how by gluttony our first parents lost Paradise, by drunkenness, how Lot became guilty; and many a dire example he brought to prove, how the love of money corrupted the human heart, rendered it insensible to the tears of the widow, the cries of the orphan, steeled it against all the finer feelings of humanity, and became the parent of violence, rapacity, injustice. These vices, he said, heinous in all, were particularly atrocious in those men whose sacred profession it was to serve God at his altars; Moses having strongly pointed out its danger by forbidding the Jewish priests to drink wine on the day they were to serve in the temple.

Having declaimed a long time in this manner, with all the energy and spirit his
ale

ale had inspired, he next displayed those precious reliques he had just brought from Rome. The first was a shoulder-bone of one of those goats, which had been the wages of Jacob, when he served Laban after his marriage; which shoulder-bone, possessed the most useful as well as wonderful virtues; for if it was steeped in any well where cattle drank, it would not only cure them of all distempers, but would render them most abundantly prolific. He had sand gathered from the bed of the river Jordan, which having been blessed by his holiness the pope, would, if scattered over the most barren land, cause it to bear crops of an hundred fold.

Many other reliques he displayed equally miraculous in their effects with these; but what he seemed to value himself most upon, and which he recommended with most eloquence to his congregation, was part of a black leather shoe,

shoe, which had once been the property of Mary Magdalen ; of which if a small piece was boiled in broth, and eaten by the most jealous man living, he would cease from that moment to have any suspicion of his wife, nor would he feel any uneasiness, though her piety sought by frequent confessions to ensure peace to her soul, and it *might* so happen that her confessor was young and handsome.

Having expatiated very diffusively on these miraculous fragments, he exhorted his hearers with great energy to make their offerings abundant ; but forbidding at the same time all those to approach, whose consciences were burdened with crimes so enormous that they dared not confess them in shrift : above all, he forbade the approach of any unmarried woman, who knew herself guilty of impurity ; or any married man or woman, who had committed the most heinous and crying sin of adultery.

All

All heard the good man's caution, but never was there a more innocent assembly; for the whole congregation, man and woman, approached in their turns, made their offerings, and saluted the reliques: nor was the inestimable shoe of Mary Magdalen forgotten. It should seem as if the husbands of that town were much given to jealousy, for father Simon snipt it out in such abundance, that but a small part remained for him to carry back to his inn. This wonderful shoe however had, for the benefit of the world, the astonishing property of renovating itself, of which he took care to inform all who were present; so that if any woman who had been so unfortunate as to miss this opportunity of ridding her husband of the most unquiet and tormenting of all passions, would attend him at his inn, she might there furnish herself with this invaluable specific. At the same time he renewed his caution, that none should apply to him for that, or any other re-

lique, whose conscience was burthened with secret crimes.

The shoe had now an admirable opportunity of displaying its self-renovating virtue, for three times did father Simon cut it out in small bits to the inhabitants of —, and thrice the next morning was the piece found as large as ever.

The wealth of father Simon abundantly increased, and with it what he called his *temperate* enjoyments : he indulged himself in every luxury the place afforded, and so ingratiated himself with his host-ess, that nothing in her power was wanting which could contribute to his happiness. But his society by no means suited Eleanor ; his gross conversation, and grosser manners shocked her : she wept her cruel destiny which had subjected her to such disgusting company, and was half inclined to put an end to this vagrant life, by giving herself to Philip.

But

But still, aversion to the father proved an unfurmountable barrier to the happiness of the son ; and though she determined to leave this place, she could not resolve to turn her steps to Longueville castle.

ON the morning, which Robert Simon was sleeping off the preceding evening's indisposition, and before the post had made her appearance, Eleanor, who did not think a formal leave of either necessary, and who was due for her confinement into the hands of the surgeon, and for the first time, with an intention, as she was then determined to this wandering life, to make the tour of the kingdom.

The prince had lately from the northern parts of England along its western border. Summer was now in its prime ; and avoiding the intricate parts of the mid-day, she performed her short journey, and arrived at the castle of Longueville, where she was to repose in the humble cottage, among the

C H A P. XVI.

ONE morning, whilst father Simon was sleeping off the preceding evening's intemperance, and before the hostess made her appearance, Eleanor, who did not think a formal leave of either necessary, paid what was due for her entertainment into the hands of the tapster, and left the inn, with an intention, as she was condemned to this wandering life, to make the tour of the kingdom.

She proceeded slowly from the northern parts of England along its western border. Summer was now in its prime; and avoiding the intense heats of the mid-day, she performed her short journeys in the morning and evening; sometimes reposing in the humble cottage, alluring
the

the kind offices and affections of its inhabitants by her sweet notes ; hearing their complaints, consoling their sorrows, counselling them in their difficulties, and administering to their necessities.

Sometimes sounding her harp at the moated castle of some proud baron, she found admittance into the hall, where, placed below the deis at the inferior table, she made the high roof echo with the warlike deeds of Arthur, and his gallant knights ; or, called upon by the fair dames for a softer lay, tuned her harp to a tender tale of love, or excited their tears by one of woe.

In melting plaintive strains, she would then recite the sad story of Elgiva's hapless fortune, the beloved wife of the youthful Edwy, faultless in face, in form, in mind ; torn from her royal husband's circling arms by the harsh, unfeeling, though sainted Dunstan ; her marriage

by a far-fetched consanguinity pronounced criminal ; her fair form branded with the foulest reproach ; her beauteous face, seared by her inhuman enemies, with burning irons, and she, unprotected and forlorn, banished to the wilds of Ireland.

Yet in that barbarous, uncultured clime, she found hearts which compassionated her woes, skilful hands, that healed her wounds, obliterated the seaming scars, and restored her pristine beauty. Secretly she returns to England, and hastens to her longing husband.—Alas, she is discovered ! Thrown into the deep damp dungeon, where, to satiate the fury of the monks for daring to be beloved of the king without their sanction, she is tortured, mangled, ham-stringed, and in agonies unspeakable expires.

This wandering life was supportable while summer and mild autumn held their

their reign, but on the approach of winter, Eleanor found it would be impossible to pursue it. Her lodgings in the summer she had regarded with indifference; she was content if they afforded her a place of repose uninterrupted, though the bed was seldom such as suited her delicate frame, being generally a straw pallet, sometimes with coarse sheets, but oftener without any, the rough straw running through the canvas, and wounding her skin, and a round log of wood was frequently her pillow: a flock bed, and a sack of chaff for a bolster were luxuries seldom to be met with, but in the houses of the superior yeomanry. But this lodging, uncomfortable in the warm season, became intolerable in the cold, when in the generality of houses, formed with wattle, and plaistered with thin clay, the inclement and damp air found entrance through the ill-guarded walls.

Another very offensive circumstance which the winter pointed out to her, was

the continual smoke in which every family was enveloped, and which, though they deemed it extremely wholesome, and even medicinal in some disorders, was to her insupportable; for there being few houses in any town built with chimneys, unless those belonging to the superior orders of barons or priests, the fire was made against a large log of wood on one side of a room; or if the room was large, and the family so likewise, then there were two or more such fires, where the several parties warmed themselves, and dressed their repast, and the footy exhalation was left to evaporate, or find its way out, as it could, at the roof, or door, or windows. Nor did the cleanliness of the floor disgrace the rest of the building, for a paved or stone flooring to these houses was seldom seen, but the damp and dirty clay was sometimes upon grand occasions strewed with ashes, to hide the complicated nastiness which overspread it.

Yet

Yet notwithstanding these disagreeable circumstances and inconveniencies, our poor minstrel, not knowing how otherwise to dispose of herself, continued her wandering, desirous of finding some safe place of refuge; but unable to do so, she had crossed from the western borders of England into the midland provinces, and coming one stormy day in December into a little village in Oxfordshire, being cold and wet, she preferred a small inn to any of the cottages which appeared miserably poor. She had dried her cloaths, and sat down to the simple fare the place afforded, when her host, who was excessively talkative and bustling, brought in a paper.

“Here,” said he, “master, read this, “you, who are a great traveller, may “have somewhere met with the lady “this paper describes.” Eleanor took it. But what was her consternation at perceiving it related to herself, was mi-

nutely descriptive of her person, and offered for her discovery a very considerable sum ! It was fortunate for her that her host was too busy and attentive to his own conversation to remark her confusion ; she soon regained some placidity of countenance, and inquired of him what the young lady had done to have a price set upon her like a criminal, or a traitor ?

“ Lack-a-day, master,” he replied,
 “ I never asks any questions. This is
 “ not a time for poor men to open their
 “ mouths. We dare not even speak an
 “ innocent joke in our own houses, for
 “ fear some spy should overhear and
 “ make treason of it. Why now ’twas
 “ but t’other day that a cousin of mine,
 “ as honest a fellow as ever broke bread,
 “ and dearly loved to be merry, and say
 “ things so comical that we were all
 “ ready to burst with laughing at them ;
 “ this cousin of mine lived in London,
 “ at

“ at the sign of the crown; it was his own
 “ house, and he one day, in his droll
 “ way said, he would make his son the
 “ heir of the crown.—As sure as you are
 “ alive, master, some cursed tale-bearer
 “ told the king of it, and said my poor
 “ cousin was making game of his title to
 “ the crown—and he was directly tuck’d
 “ up—hanged, master—poor George!—
 “ No, no, I never talks of what don’t
 “ concern me, nor never will joke again
 “ so long as I live. The king has cured
 “ us all of joking, I warrant—and yet he
 “ loves his jests and his gibes, and his
 “ pretty lasses.—Poor George had not a
 “ handsome wife or daughter—so much
 “ the worse for *him*, master.—But that is
 “ no business of mine, any more than
 “ that all the citizens are in a fair road to
 “ Heaven, if some sort of folk go there—
 “ ha, master!—but that is no business of
 “ mine. But in regard to this young
 “ lady, if I could find her out, it might
 “ turn out a very pretty business, you
 “ know,

“ know, master, and the heavy purse of
 “ marks would make me a rich man as
 “ long as I live.—If you could inform
 “ me any thing about her, we might go
 “ snacks, ha? What say you? Did you
 “ ever see such a young lady as this paper
 “ describes? pale auburn hair? fair
 “ complexion?—By St. Martin, I believes
 “ as how, you know something about
 “ her, for you blush confoundedly—
 “ I am *sure* you knows something of
 “ her.”

“ Indeed, not I,” said Eleanor gravely,
 endeavouring by a frown to repress his
 familiar impertinence; “ Tell me what
 “ is to pay.”—“ Lawk-a-day, don’t be
 “ angry now,” he cried, “ why, you
 “ had better stay here all night, it is ten
 “ miles to L——, where you say you are
 “ going, the road very deep and miry,
 “ and the path-way through a forest,
 “ where you may chance to lose yourself
 “ in the dark, and it will be dark in
 “ another

“ another hour—’tis bitter cold, and go-
 “ ing to snow—you had better stay here
 “ all night, and tell me what you know
 “ of this young lady.—Eh !”

He peered in her face as he spoke this, and Eleanor, conscious it was suffused with another blush, hastily turned from him, said she had business of the utmost importance which obliged her to be at L—— that night, threw down the money for her dinner, and hurried out of the house, glad to get rid of her tormenting host, though she encountered the most inclement sky, and a lodging in the mazes of the forest.

The day soon closed, the moon was in its last quarter, and a thick gloomy atmosphere excluded the glimmering of every star : the path she was in branched out into several others, and the light was too imperfect to discern the marks by which she had been informed that to

L—— was to be known; obliged to chuse at random, she took the wrong, and in a very short time had completely bewildered herself: she turned back again, hoping to regain the path in which she had first set out, but she was in a short time enveloped in pitchy darkness; the wind rose almost to a storm, which rushing between the trees in howling blasts, tearing from them the remains of their withered foliage, waving their broad heads, and bending their tough trunks, terrified her inexpressibly; scarcely was she able to stand against it. At length it seemed a little to have exhausted its fury, for which she was blessing herself, and hurrying forward, though she knew not whither, when a shower of snow and sleet drove full in her face, rendered her almost breathless, and benumbed her weary limbs with cold.

Her spirits now sunk: she turned her back to the pelting of the storm, which seemed

seemed to blow through all her garments, and universally chilled her frame. She stood a few minutes hopeless, desponding, and was upon the point of throwing herself upon the earth, and resigning to her fate, when the sound of a bell struck her ear.

—Its strokes vibrated upon her heart, and gave it force to repel the fear which overwhelmed it—it was a convent bell, she thought, ringing for vespers, and by its sound, at no great distance. With sharpened sight, directed by her ear, she endeavoured to pierce the gloom which surrounded her, and to her infinite joy espied a light glimmering through the leafless branches: to that she turned her steps, with quickened pulse, and renovated spirits.

Obliged to comply with the windings of the path, the thick underwood forbidding all deviation, she sometimes had
the

the light in view, sometimes lost it; agitated alternately by hopes and fears, she pressed forward; the bell had ceased; at length the light seemed to be entirely vanished, and again her heart was oppressed with apprehension. She stopt a moment, and looked again round—a violent rustling in the bushes added to her alarm, and a faint scream succeeded—she sunk down in affright, concluding some unhappy traveller was then murdering—instantly a light creature bounded over her, and in the next moment a barking gave her reason to imagine that what she had heard was a dog pursuing a hare.

Smiling at her own folly she rose, and after going a few paces, perceived herself out of the forest: but though now in the open air, all objects were from the deep darkness as imperceptible as before, and she could not discern the least ray of that light which she so eagerly sought. She

stood still, uncertain which way to direct her steps; ignorant what kind of place she was in, the idea of bogs, pits, precipices, darted across her thoughts, and withheld her from walking forwards. Another storm now came up, and the fleet and snow drove thick upon her, which the piercing wind congealed almost to ice. Benumbed, fatigued, disheartened, she threw herself in a passion of despair on the wet earth, when the striking of a great clock almost close to her right hand, revived her to life and hope.

She jumped up, and ran towards the sound with such velocity, that encountering the wall it beat her down; she, however, sustained no hurt; and now walking more cautiously, she groped round the wall till she found the gate, and at last discovered the bell: in a transport of joy she pulled it with such a spring as alarmed the whole convent.

Though

Though from the shortness of the days, and the gloominess of the weather, it had been some hours dark; it was not yet midnight, and but few of the nuns had retired to their cells. The portress, who was alone in her apartment, unlocked her own door, passed into the court, and through a little wicket, inquired who disturbed the peace of the house at that unseemly hour?

Eleanor told a short but pathetic tale, of being lost in the forest, amidst the darkness of the night, and the driving of the storm; and implored, in a tone of irresistible energy, the shelter of the roof till morning.

The good-natured portress coming out of a well-warmed room, was perfectly sensible of the severity of the cold, as well as incommoded by the snow; she pitied the person who had so many hours been exposed to it, and unlocked the outer-
gate :

gate : but telling Eleanor she dared not admit any one, particularly a *man*, into the sacred inclosure, without the leave of the prioress, she directed her to stand for shelter under the piazza of the cloisters, whilst she went to request her permission. “ But be of good cheer,” said she to our drooping heroine, “ the prioress will give leave, I doubt not; she is the most tender-hearted lady in the world, and weeps at the death of a mouse—be of good cheer, I shall soon return with good news.”

Sister Catharine, however, had overrated the humanity of the prioress, whom she found at supper with some particular favourites, and who reproved her much for opening the gate to such vagabonds as were found wandering from their houses at such unseemly hours.

In vain the portress urged the excessive cold, which she declared cut her face, and

and hands when she opened the gate; the intricacies of the forest, the danger of the poor creature's perishing by the inclemency of the weather; all were urged in vain, and the distressed Eleanor would have been turned from the inhospitable roof, to certain death, had she not fortunately at last said, that the poor petitioner was a minstrel. Sister Winifred, the dearest friend of the prioress, doated upon music; it was seldom she could be gratified, and she snatched at this occasion: one word from her was sufficient, and sister Catharine ran back with the joyful tidings of admittance.

But when, half palled with the keen air, and dropping with wet, Eleanor entered the prioress's warm apartment, the sudden transition from cold to heat affected her so much, that after a few involuntary sighs she fainted away.

Sister Catharine was in a great fright. Some nuns had followed her to the door, where

where they stood wrapt in their veils, peeping at the minstrel: she called to them, they assisted her to loosen the harp, and lay it aside; it was next thought necessary to unclasp her collar, to give the fainting person air; when the lovely bosom of Eleanor thus exposed, disclosed to the surpris'd eyes of the nuns, that the minstrel was a woman.

Their officiousness upon this discovery did not abate, and by their assiduities she was soon recovered to sensibility. But a cold shivering ran through her veins; a darting unequal pain, like the flashings of a flame, shot through her head; her brain was confus'd; and she had scarcely understanding sufficient left to implore their pity.

She had it, however, without asking: these good sisters commiserated her forlorn state; they gave her some cordial medicines; they freed her from her wet
hab-

habiliments, and put her into Catharine's bed; then leaving the good-natured woman to take care of her, they hastened to the prioress to inform her of the incident.

But that humane superior did not see things in the same light as her simple nuns: she reprov'd them with much warmth for their indiscreet zeal for one, who, she observed, it was evident, from her assuming the dress of a man, and being wandering abroad at such an improper season of the year, and such indecent hours, must be one of the most abandoned and wicked of her sex. She expressed a horror at having their sacred walls contaminated by such an inmate: and though, she said, she had in her *extreme* compassion given leave for the wretch to shelter there for the night, she insisted that in the morning, let her pretend ever so much illness—and such creatures, she remarked, had *consummate* art—
let

let her put on the *appearance* of never so much distress, she should be thrust from the walls of their holy house, dedicated to purity and virtue.

This command, resulting, no doubt, from habitual nicety and decorum, could not however be obeyed; for the unhappy Eleanor, after a very restless night, in which the good Catharine sat up with her, was the next morning in the delirium of a high fever; and the prioress, much against her inclination, and not without severely upbraiding the nuns for their indiscretion, was constrained to let her remain in the convent.

Sister Catharine, whom misfortune had driven into this retreat, as an asylum from the sorrows she had experienced in the world, and who possessed the tenderest and best of human hearts, nursed Eleanor, assisted by another nun as compassionate as herself, with the solicitude of friend-

friendship, for a fortnight, in which the fever continued with great violence. Nor was she without medical assistance, for the confessor of the convent acted as physician; and his medicines, consisting of such simples as their own garden afforded, were faithfully prepared and administered by apothecary Catharine.

The fever at length left our heroine, whether driven away by the skill of the doctor, or the youth and natural excellent constitution of the patient, remained problematical: but its ravages had reduced her to such a state of extreme debility, that it was the general opinion she could not live; and father Martin resuming his own function, thought it necessary she should be confessed, and receive the last sacrament.

With her confession of the few sins with which her imagination, rather than her conscience, was oppressed, and among which

which her partiality to her father's murderer stood the most eminently conspicuous, for she felt that even in death she loved his memory, and cherished his idea. Eleanor gave, both to the confessor and the nuns, an epitome of the history of her life. Then taking the holy sacrament with the truest devotion, in all its affecting forms, she, like a wearied traveller, arrived in prospect of his place of rest, sunk down upon her pillow with a placid smile, in tranquil expectation of that moment, which, disencumbering her soul from its mortal companion, should enable it to wing its way to the regions of eternal joy.

The perfect serenity of her mind communicated its kindly influence to her frame; she fell insensibly into a quiet and undisturbed sleep, in which she continued some hours; and awoke in a state of convalescence.

CHAP. XVII.

THE recovery of Eleanor was now as rapid as had been the progress of her illness: in a short time after she had been thought dying, she was able to totter, with the assistance of the benevolent Catharine, to the apartment of the prioress, to make her grateful acknowledgements for her hospitality.

Acquainted now with her quality, the heart of that lady was much softened towards her. She was received, however, with great dignity and much cold form: the ardent effusions of Eleanor's gratitude for the tender care which had been taken of her, the merit of which certainly rested in the compassionate portress, seemed to be regarded by this stately superior, as the

the payment of a debt due alone to her *own* superlative merit ; and she intimated very explicitly to her poor feeble visitant, that as soon as she found herself capable of travelling, she should leave the convent.

Eleanor threw herself at the feet of this prim and stately piece of cold formality, entreating in the most pathetic and energetic terms, that she might be permitted to spend the remainder of her days in this holy retreat.

“ And who,” said the prioress, “ is to pay your pension ?”

Eleanor then explained to her, that could she be secured from the machinations of St. Julian, she could then effectually claim her fortune, which, as the sole heiress of her father, was very large ; and she gave her honour to settle the greater part of it on that house.

The tender-hearted prioress paused on this proposal: her crimped lips relaxed to something like a smile. She raised Eleanor from the floor, where she had been all this time suffered to kneel; she even called her a dear unfortunate child; but added, that it was necessary to consider on what had been said, before she could give a decisive answer; and she dismissed our heroine with some expressions of unwonted kindness.

To Eleanor, disgusted with the turbulent scenes she had witnessed, wearied with a desultory wandering life, the calm, the quiet, the harmony of this peaceful retirement had peculiar charms, and she ardently wished here to repose herself for the remainder of her days, thinking the Almighty had providentially pointed out to her this haven of rest from the storms of her adverse fortune. She hastened therefore to her friend Catharine, as fast as her feeble limbs would
 carry

carry her, to acquaint her with the favourable disposition of the prioress ; and that good mother, as she called her, and who really seemed to feel for her a maternal affection, rejoiced exceedingly in the hope of such an addition to their society.

A cabinet council of some of the choice sisters was now held, to which the confessor, father Martin, was also called ; the prioress laid before them the proposals of Eleanor, and requested their opinion and advice.

The father said, that no doubt the fortune of the earl de Longueville would be a most noble acquisition, but it behoved the prioress to consider whether it was probable she could ever secure it. These seemed to be times in which there was a suspension of all ancient order ; and the ecclesiastical, as well as the civil law, was totally disregarded. It was not likely

the feeble claims of a convent should be attended to, when they were opposed by a person of so much influence as St. Julian, who had proved by what he had already done, what lengths he was capable of going to effect his purposes: and it was rather to be imagined, that the king would gladly snatch at the opportunity of Eleanor's becoming a nun, to punish her as a refractory ward of the crown, by allowing her a small pension as a mere maintenance only, and reward cheaply to himself a zealous partisan, by giving St. Julian her fortune. If the good prioress, from motives of *charity* and *compassion* would admit her —

The good prioress pursed up her mouth. She mincingly, and in a soft and delicate voice, sang forth the *extreme* tenderness of her own heart; her *exquisite* feelings for *all* the creatures of God; and with eyes devoutly cast up to heaven, she protested by the blessed Virgin, that nothing could afford

afford her soul such rapturous pleasure as administering succour to the distressed ; but here, unhappily, and she fetched a deep sigh, her pity for *one individual* clashed with her duty to that *community* which heaven in its great goodness had committed to her care ; and the narrowness of her income, and the low state of her treasury, forbade her incurring new expences ; she could not therefore *dare*, great as her inclinations were, to afford her an asylum—she *dared* not, it was inconsistent with her *duty* to sacrifice to *one* person, the convenience and happiness of a whole *society*.

The father pleaded for Eleanor, but his pleadings were in vain ; for he unhappily marred all his arguments by saying that her *extreme beauty* rendered her unsupported state exceedingly dangerous. This was touching a string which jarred with the whole sisterhood. The prioress, ever upright, craned her head to the utmost

extent of her neck ; the plaits of her mouth were drawn closer, and with a double portion of formality, she said, that even had the young woman a proper pension, she should be unwilling to take the trouble of such a *beauty*, as it must prove a very arduous undertaking to wean her thoughts from the world, and fit her for the holy vocation.

“ Ah !” said sister Agnes, “ she would make a most insufferable companion ; we should have her, instead of repeating her ave marias, recounting her conquests.”

“ True,” said sister Winifred, “ and I think as her uncle is still willing to restore her fortune, on the condition she marries his son, it would be doing her a most essential service to give her up to him, for from what can her objections result but caprice ?”

“ You

“ You are perfectly right,” said sister Bridget, “ and it becomes us to teach
 “ such foolish chits their duty—the mo-
 “ ney which accrues may be chari-
 “ tably disposed of in our impoverished
 “ house.”

“ I think,” said their superior, with a little twang through her nose—“ I think,
 “ my good girls, some angel, watchful of
 “ the *real* benefit of this child, though
 “ like a child she is insensible to what is
 “ for her real benefit, and would fool-
 “ ishly spurn it from her ; yet surely her
 “ guardian spirit has suggested this ad-
 “ vice ; and it is without doubt my duty
 “ to give up this refractory girl to those
 “ whom the laws of her sovereign have
 “ appointed her directors.—You, father,
 “ will have the goodness to procure me
 “ a messenger to count St. Julian ; and
 “ also write him a letter, to inform him,
 “ that deeply sensible of the respect due
 “ to the civil laws of my country, I wave
 I 5 “ the

“ the holy privilege of sanctuary, and give
 “ up to him his rebellious niece. You
 “ will likewise,” added she, with an affected air of indifference, and in a low voice, which was, however, perfectly articulate—“ you will just *mention* the proclaimed reward. I should not,” said she, deeply sighing, “ have thought
 “ about it, but for the extreme indigence
 “ of my house, and in consideration of
 “ those precious souls which the holy
 “ Virgin has given to my care.”

“ But we must be secret, father,” said sister Winifred, “ or this weak girl, blind
 “ to her own interest, may find some
 “ method to elude our endeavours for
 “ her benefit. Her plausible and insinuating manners have gained her
 “ many friends; sister Catharine is quite
 “ fascinated; and even *you*, father, are
 “ not without your partiality—*you* are
 “ struck with her extreme beauty.”

“ I par-

“ *I partial!—am I struck?—alas, she*
 “ *is a child—a perfect infant.—Could my*
 “ *heart, devoted as it is to the charms of*
 “ *the mother of God, could it ever be sen-*
 “ *sible to mortal beauty, it must be to*
 “ *that of a woman of maturer form, of*
 “ *more ripened age; one that could*
 “ *unite the attractions of mind to person,*
 “ *and attach at once my understanding*
 “ *and my affections—but this puny*
 “ *thing!—a lovely infant merely!—*
 “ *you do injustice, daughter, both to*
 “ *my sense and my taste.—I pity, I con-*
 “ *fess, her misfortunes; I would wil-*
 “ *lingly assist in extricating her out of*
 “ *them, which I perceive cannot be so*
 “ *effectually done, as in the equally*
 “ *wise and humane plan you have sug-*
 “ *gested—and I will immediately set*
 “ *about it.*”

He withdrew, and in a few hours
 wrote and dispatched a person in whom
 he could confide, to St. Julian, with po-

fitive orders, if he or his son were not at home, to follow them into whatever part of the kingdom they might be in.

So diligent was the messenger of father Martin, and so eager was St. Julian to benefit by his intelligence, and agreeably surprise his son with Eleanor, on his return, for he was then with the king, that it was but the eve of the fifth day, from that on which the conspiracy against our heroine had been entered into, when a violent knocking at the convent gate alarmed all its inhabitants which were not in the secret, and threw a party of nuns into no small consternation, who were assembled in the portress's apartment after vespers, to hear Eleanor sing and play on the harp.

The nuns scudded silently to their different cells; the portress ran to open the wicket of the outer gate, and inquire what was the matter; and our heroine
was

was under great alarm, though she knew not for what reason, for the prioress had been profuse in her expressions of friendship since she had solicited a vocation in the house, though she had not positively granted her request: alarmed, however, Eleanor followed her friend to the wicket, but what was her consternation, when in answer to the prioress's interrogation, she heard the well-known voice of St. Julian, who bid her tell the superior that a gentleman attended her in consequence of father Martin's letter!—The whole plot instantly darted itself into her imagination.

Sister Catharine, entirely unsuspecting of what had been concerted against her friend, did not observe the change in her countenance, but bidding St. Julian wait till she had informed the prioress, and hastily telling Eleanor that a whole company of soldiers were at the gate, she ran to deliver the message.

The

The prioress having a great cold, and a rheumatic pain in her right-hand, had gone unusually early to bed ; but on hearing sister Catharine's intelligence, started up, determining to transact this momentous and profitable business herself : but having dismissed to bed the lay sister, whose office it was to attend her, she detained the portress to assist her in dressing ; and this important matter not being easily adjusted, for she was desirous of looking as *nice* as possible, her long preparation for appearance gave our heroine an opportunity of escaping from her treachery.

Nothing doubting her being betrayed, the ready and prompt spirit of Eleanor, the moment she was left to herself, suggested the means of eluding the machinations of her enemies. Her minstrel's dress was in the room, a moment equipped her in it, and fastened on her harp. The keys of the church into which the
por-

portress's apartment also opened, hung on a nail; she snatched them thence, unlocked the door, passed quietly through the church to the door which opened into the country, which she also unlocked, and then locking it again, and throwing the keys at some distance, she with transport perceived herself at liberty.

There was no moon, but it was a frosty evening, and the stars twinkled with uncommon brilliancy; she ran and walked with such alacrity, that she was entirely insensible of the cold, and scarcely felt fatigue, though, eager to get as far as possible from the convent, she continued her hurrying pace till morning.

As the day slowly broke, and the sun looked dimly through the misty thick air, her apprehensions of being descried at a distance by her pursuers—for she had no doubt of being pursued the moment she was missed, directed her hurried steps to
a castle

a castle which she saw on a rising ground at some little distance before her; and which from its appearance, many of the towers and battlements being broken, she imagined, though it was not absolutely in ruins, was uninhabited.

Of this place she judged very properly : it formed one of the many memorials of the devastation of that fatal war, which had devoured the bowels of this unhappy nation, depopulated the country, almost annihilated the nobility, and ruined such a multitude of individuals.

It had, before these intestine discords, been in the possession of a noble and opulent family; the last of whom, sir Philip du Camp, being warmly engaged in the interest of the house of Lancaster, had been besieged in this castle by the York party. It was taken by them, sir Philip and his two sons slain, the mansion despoiled by the soldiery of every

every valuable, and its domain given to the use of one of their own partisans. Another change in public affairs had occasioned a change also in the masters of this castle. These again being dispossessed by the present predominant party, and its late proprietors slain, it lay in its present desolate state, not only neglected but forgotten, none of the favourites of the present day appearing either to claim or beg it.

Eleanor lightly passed the broken draw-bridge over the half-choaked moat into the first court, from thence through a breach in the wall into the second, and then into the hall, which was but little impaired by the depredations of its assailants ; and as its ornaments afforded no gratification to their avarice or rapacity, it still retained all the marks of its pristine solemn grandeur ; all the trophies of the gallantry of its original possessors—broken
hel-

helmets, battered shields, hacked swords, and tattered banners.

The high-raised deis marked where once in proud state had sat the haughty baron and his compeers : and the large Gothic windows reluctantly admitted the light through the gaudy blazonry of his armorial honours. Small time had Eleanor to moralize on the reversed solitary scene, far differing from what she supposed had formerly been exhibited here, or on the frail tenure by which humanity holds all the pomps and pageantry of life, ere her meditations were interrupted by the sound of horses' feet.

Not doubting but they were those of her pursuers, she dared not look round, but flew like a frightened bird, out at another door into a large room, and there seeing a spacious staircase, she ran up it, into a long winding gallery, and per-

perceived that the internal part of the castle had suffered scarcely at all, but that it was the broken walls of the courts, and the demolition of some turrets and outer towers, which gave it so much the appearance of a ruin, for that the inner apartments were perfectly entire.

Not thinking herself safe till she was at the utmost distance from her pursuers, she ran up several staircases, till she reached the upper floor of the castle, immediately under its roof, the cieling of which having been injured, discovered in many places the leaden covering.

The clatter of horses seemed to increase : she ventured to draw near a small window, and in that moment saw St. Julian enter, accompanied by a train of servants, to whom she heard him give directions for a strict search, as there was no doubt of her being there, her foot-
steps

steps being so exactly traced in the hoar frost.

Her heart sunk at hearing this; she knew no place would be left unexplored by him and his assiduous followers; she blamed her own precipitation that had hurried her up to the top of the house, from whence there was now no retiring, and in which she must be caught as in a trap; whereas in the cellars and recesses of the castle, she might possibly have found some hiding place. She had run through all the upper apartments of this attic story, and the walls of the castle impeded her farther progress.

She listened in an agony of distress—the sound of voices, the noise of footsteps reverberated through the large empty apartments: she looked round—no method of escape presented itself—she dared not return, that was certain
dis-

discovery, and a thick wall stopt her from proceeding—she plainly heard them ascending the stairs—despair seized her—she looked wildly round—below—above—an aperture in the ceiling, made by the falling of the plaister, met her eyes—without a second thought she drew an old table under it, and getting upon it, she crept into the hole with great difficulty, for the harp incumbered her, and that she dared not leave behind, as it would have evinced her being near at hand.

She now found herself under the leaded roof of the castle, which being disjointed in several places, gave her sufficient light for her singular peregrination. She walked cautiously along the beams and joists of this large building, to a considerable distance from the place where she entered; and hearing very plainly men's steps ascending the upper stories, she crouched down behind a large piece of timber in
the

the darkest part, where she sat with trembling limbs and palpitating heart, as the noise of those who were searching for her, drew every moment perceptibly nearer.

She heard them pass through every room in the attic story, as they no doubt had before done through every other part of the house: their hoarse and savage voices echoed to her with double harshness; among which she plainly distinguished the authoritative tone of St. Julian.

After a considerable time, the voices and steps seemed dying off to a greater distance; yet for a long time, and till the day was declining, she heard them from various quarters, as if, not believing it possible but she must be there, they had searched the castle over and over again.

At

At length, to the infinite satisfaction of Eleanor, she heard them depart, wearied with their fruitless search, and eager to repair by a hasty pursuit the time lost here. She saw them through the crevices of the roofing pass the draw-bridge ; nor did she quit them with her eye till they were far advanced into the adjacent country, and dispersed in various directions.

With lightened heart, Eleanor endeavoured to return back from whence she came, but the innumerable timbers, like a pathless wood, bewildered her in an inextricable labyrinth, and she walked backwards and forwards without perceiving any place at which she could get down, except where the walls and turrets had been battered, which opened to her in horrid chasms, or frightful precipices.

Night

Night was coming on, and our poor heroine had no other prospect but spending it in this place. She still walked about, and but the more bewildered herself. The room from which she entered, she well knew was next to the castle wall, and she had coursed along very carefully round a great part of that wall to no purpose.

It began to grow dark, there was no moon, and the sky from the thickness of the air seemed starless. Still she groped her way along the wall, and at last found a considerable breach, but feeling the air at the same time blow near her, though not immediately from the place, and imagining this was like some other openings she had seen, she dared not enter it.

Wearied with her long walking, faint with hunger, oppressed with grief and disappointment, Eleanor, hopeless, set
her-

herself down upon a piece of timber which crossed her path, and eased her full heart by a flood of tears; whilst deep and almost convulsive sighs, at the peculiar cruelty of her destiny, heaved her bosom. She wept till the source of her tears seemed exhausted; her head grew heavy, she rested her throbbing temples against a beam; sleep insensibly stole over her senses, and afforded her for a few hours a happy oblivion of all her sorrows.

The dazzling rays of the sun darting through an aperture in the war-worn roof on the bright eyes of Eleanor, awoke her from a pleasing dream to a painful recollection of the singularity of her situation. She slowly rose, for her limbs, benumbed with cold, and stiffened with fatigue, almost refused their office; she crawled towards the breach at which she had stopt the preceding night, and, to her unspeakable joy, found it gave en-

trance into a room which had been formed in an upper round tower of the castle. Not doubting but from this place she could get down into the lower apartments, she squeezed herself between the ragged and broken stones into it. It was dark, except a glimmering of light through some boards, which Eleanor, on examination, found was a shutter to a small window; she attempted to open it, and succeeded.

She looked round—how great was her astonishment at perceiving what constituted the furniture of this room! large chests of massy plate—bags of gold coin—cabinets of exquisite workmanship, with jewels of priceless value.

Her astonishment was great, but not the faintest desire rose in her soul to appropriate to her own use these evidently unmastered treasures, though utterly excluded from her legal property, and
wan-

wandering in houseless indigence: unmoved by their splendour, she sought only for a passage from this room to some other, and at last discovered a door concealed behind some coarse hangings, which, on opening, she found led to a narrow winding staircase.

She closed again the window of the treasury, shut the door, and descended the stairs, which, after a very considerable descent, winding in utter darkness, she found ended in a kind of landing place, and her farther progress was stopt by a door, but so fastened, that she knew not how it could be opened.

After fruitlessly trying for a long time, and beginning to despair of ever being able to revisit the lower regions of this mansion, she fortunately pressed a spring as she was feeling round it, and it instantly opened. She now found herself

behind some tapestry, which lifting up, she entered a small closet.

Elated with being once again as she hoped at liberty, she closed carefully the door by which she had come in, that no accidental depredators might rob the legal owners, if there were any such existing, of these so happily concealed riches; and she observed that the door was so artfully made, that when shut, it was scarcely possible to discern it. She then went forward into a large apartment, in which still remained the magnificent canopy of a costly bed, which the plunderers of the place had not given themselves the trouble of taking down, though its curtains and ornaments were torn from it. The large bedstead also remained, and even some of the usual accommodations, and likewise some chairs, divested of their rich velvet coverings.

On

On one of these, overcome with fatigue, and long fasting, Eleanor dropt her weary trembling limbs, and considered what it was best for her to do. Hunger impelled her to leave the castle, and seek the necessary sustenance of nature in some neighbouring cottage: yet dread lest St. Julian, who seemed so positive he had traced her footsteps, had left some of his servants near to watch, made her fearful of venturing.

However, after sitting a short time, with timid steps she walked down stairs, and entered the hall, where, with pleasure inconceivable to those whose affluence has held them in happy ignorance of the keenest sensation of nature, she perceived that St. Julian had not travelled without provisions—he had, indeed, whilst the castle was under examination, sent a servant to the neighbouring village for some for himself and attendants. She

saw on the large table the fragments of their repast.

The half-picked bones, the gnawn crusts, were beheld with eager eyes by our half-famished heroine; and the only child and heiress of one of the most opulent barons in England, devoured the leavings of her uncle's menial train with an avidity, a keenness of appetite, which a beggar seldom knows: a horn, which had been forgotten, half filled with ale, completed the feast.

Eleanor found herself wonderfully refreshed by the most delicious repast she had ever made, and seated on the step of the deis, reflected, that as the day was far advanced, it would be prudent to remain one night more where she was, when she hoped that if St. Julian had left any of his servants to watch the castle, they would suppose she could not be there,

there, and would, by the next morning, have left their station.

The time dragged heavily on, without one occupation to give wings to the hours; she was afraid to touch her harp, lest it should betray her to some insidious listener; nor dared she, for the same reason, gratify her curiosity by rambling through the rooms of this spacious building: she thought it better to return to the large chamber, for from thence, if she heard any alarming noise, she could retire into the closet, and so up the secret staircase of the treasury.

To this room therefore she repaired, and amused herself as well as she was able, by looking out of the window, which afforded an extensive prospect into the adjacent country. But though a large tract of land was in view, the prospect was far from being a pleasing one; the leafless trees, the uncultured fields, the

ruinous cottages, all seemed to partake the desolation which marked the stately fabric she was in. Yet, for want of other employment, there she stood, till night gradually veiled the face of nature, and the landscape at length faded from her eye.

She then threw herself on the bed to indulge an inclination to sleep; the weather, happily for her, was become mild for the season, so that the coverings which she found, kept her comfortably warm, and she continued in a quiet repose till midnight, when she was suddenly waked by a noise in her apartment.

She lifted up her eyes—thought she saw the room blazing with uncommon light, and a figure standing by the side of her bed, with all the features of St. Maur.

Terror inconceivable seized her soul; she snatched the bed-covering over her head,

head, whilst every terrifying idea of shrouded ghosts, and unquiet spirits, flitted through her hurried and confused imagination.

The wind had risen to a great height : it entered, in unequal blasts, through the broken window, and shook the arras of the room : the doors clattered, the night-birds screamed, and the door of her apartment was thrown to with a sound that reverberated through all the castle.

Half dead with fright, Eleanor lay some time ; she then ventured to uncover her head, and peeped out—the light was vanished—no ghost to be seen—the wind still continued, but the deepest darkness reigned around.

Her pulse was too tumultuous, her mind too much agitated to think again of sleeping ; and tired of her hard lodging, she wished to rise and walk about ; yet a

dread of the re-appearance of the ghost detained her where she was: she listened to every noise, she endeavoured to pierce through the darkness to see if it remained in the room; she shut her eyes, and it swam before her; she opened them again, the indistinct glimmerings of light on the first dawn of day, aided the illusions of her disturbed imagination; she gazed round on the uncertain objects; she thought she saw him, and with a faint scream she sunk panting on her hard couch.

Never was day more welcome to mortal eye. As soon as it was fully light, Eleanor rose, slung her harp by its chain, walked with trepidation down the stairs, hurried through the hall, and felt her heart lightened at every step she took from the walls of this terrifying and unfortunate place.

C H A P. XVIII.

ELEANOR, hurrying from the haunted castle, walked through unfrequented paths, till she reached the charming village of Ewelme ; where a beautiful church, which seemed not many years to have been erected, and a plain but spacious mansion, which a tablet in its front declared “ dedicated to God, “ for the relief of the poor,” attracted her attention, and excited her inquiries.

She was informed they had both been built by that unfortunate favourite of Margaret, William de la Pole, the first duke of Suffolk ; and that his duchess, who had assisted in the pious work, resided at a noble mansion in the village.

The person to whom Eleanor had addressed herself for information, happened to be an old servant of the duchess, and a man of much intelligence. He was loquacious in the praise of his noble mistress, and painted her in the most amiable, as well as the most respectable colours. With the garrulity of age, he entered into as much of her history as had reached his knowledge; and informed Eleanor, that after the death of the duke, she still retained the favour of the queen, and was supposed so much to influence her councils, that her name was included with that of the duke of Somerset, and several other of the ministry, in a petition presented to Henry in the year 1451 from the commons, for their dismissal from court.

That alarmed with this attack, and disgusted with a public life, the duchess had retired to this seat, where, occupied in works of piety and benevolence, she
 had

had continued ever since, and had neither interested herself on either side of the present political feuds, nor suffered her son to intermeddle in them, who was perhaps the only nobleman in the kingdom unengaged in those civil broils. But that this neutrality was supposed to be contrary to the inclinations of the duke, though he was too dutiful and good a son to act counter to the wishes of his mother; for being nearly related by the female line to the Beauforts, it was imagined he was warmly attached to the whole house of Lancaster, of which the Beauforts were a branch.

The amiable and generous character given of the duchess, determined Eleanor to endeavour to acquire her protection: the old servant had at first persuaded her to visit the family, and she with alacrity accepted the invitation, hoping that some fortunate chance might

introduce her to the presence of the duchess.

Her new acquaintance, Francis, conducted her to the house, led her into the servants' hall, where Eleanor tuned her harp; and with its melody, and that of her voice, so enchanted her hearers, that her fame flew with rapid wing from the lower to the higher order of domestics; and a favourite woman of the duchess's was so delighted, that she prevailed upon the duchess herself to hear this charming minstrel.

Eleanor was now conducted into the great hall, whither also every servant of the family followed. The duchess appeared in a gallery. Eleanor, assuming all the air of the minstrel, made three lowly reverences, tempered a string or two of her harp with the wrest, cleared her voice with a gentle hem, and then,
know-

knowing the duchess to be the granddaughter of Chaucer, she sung, with an affecting melancholy sweetness, the following lines from that father of English poetry:

SONG.

Within my true and careful heart there is

So mochil woe, and eke so little blis,

That woe is me that ever I was bore!

For all that thing which I desire I miss,

And all that ever I would not, I wis,

That find I ready for me evermore.

The extreme youth, as well as beauty of the minstrel; the melody of her voice, the plaintive sweetness of the strain, but above all, the lines from her predecessor so affectingly set, interested the heart of the duchess: she left the gallery, and sent one of her attendants to shew Eleanor into the winter apartment, where she had not been long, ere the noble Alice entered.

This graceful descendant of the first English poet was majestically formed beyond the middle height: she had never been a regular beauty; but the intelligence sparkling in her eyes, the united spirit and sweetness beaming in her countenance, gave her face more attraction, than mere symmetry of features, or brilliancy of complexion, and, united to a most accomplished mind, had acquired and preserved her the hearts of three noble husbands.

The dress of the duchess well befitted her rank, as well as the gravity of widowhood; it was of black velvet, richly embroidered with gold, and ornamented at the wrists and collar with a valuable fur. A costly rosary was twisted round her left arm, each ave-maria composed of a large topaz, each pater-noster of an oriental pearl, strung upon a chain of gold, pendant to which hung a sparkling diamond cross. At her girdle, which was
broad

broad and embossed with pearls, hung a black silk purse, with pearl tassels, and ornamented with diamonds in stars.

With much condescending sweetness, she questioned the minstrel; and though her interrogatories were not all answered so fully as she expected, she discovered sufficient to convince her that the object of her attention was amiable and distressed—nothing more was requisite to excite her compassion; and compassion and assistance, in every possible instance, went hand in hand with this truly noble dame.

“ I have,” said she, “ no minstrel be-
 “ longing to my family; it is not any
 “ dislike to music, but the liberties in
 “ which too generally those professors of
 “ it indulge themselves, the almost uni-
 “ versal dissoluteness of their lives, which
 “ has deterred me from taking one.—
 “ But as you appear unfortunate, and dis-
 “ tressed,

“ trest, if you will accept of an asylum
 “ in my house, you shall have it as long
 “ as I find you worthy—the duration of
 “ my favour shall depend upon your-
 “ self.”

The effusion of Eleanor's gratitude was ardent; she fell at the duchess's feet, and kissed the hem of her robe, whilst the dazzling joy of her eyes glittered through tears like an April sun.

With transport she entered upon her new office; the duchess dined, and Eleanor enlivened the repast with her cheerful notes: she was then dismissed to the second table, where she found the squires of the household, and the upper domestics, none of whom seemed to disdain her society: she made it her study to render herself pleasing to them all, and happily succeeded, for all seemed to be glad of her good fortune.

Like

Like a mariner, long the sport of storms and tempests, our heroine rejoiced at having at last reached a haven where she could repose her wearied soul in security. The nation also at this juncture breathed a while from the horrors of intestine war. But though open hostilities were for the present ceased, the rancour of party was by no means allayed: the triumphant Yorkists insulted with unrelenting cruelty the prostrate Lancastrians. A word amiss, an intercepted letter, with a doubtful expression, were sufficient to condemn the greatest of that unfortunate party.

What a mixed, what a contradictory character was Edward's! at once ferocious and cruel, yet soft and amorous: at one moment haughty, furious, unforgiving: the next affable, gallant, fascinating: hated by one half of his subjects as an unrelenting tyrant, adored by

by the other as the most amiable of men.

This inconsistency originated in the peculiar circumstances of the times operating on Edward's predominant passions, which were ambition and the love of pleasure: of which, though the latter found few restraints to its full enjoyment, the former still smarted under the remembrance of disappointed, or impeded gratification, and still trembled for the permanence of its attainments. The remembrance of past injustice, therefore, and the fear of future dangers, irritated and inflamed the mind of Edward, and excited his inveterate hatred against every member of the unfortunate Lancastrian party, for each member he regarded as his own personal enemy. He considered each, not in the light of a foe armed against the public weal, but as a private enemy arrayed against his own peculiar pretensions as an individual. And his
fero-

ferocious mind, early familiarised to scenes of blood, and hardened against every humane sensation; too cruel even to desire, too impetuous to attempt by mild and gentle methods to conciliate the minds of his foes, and turn them into friends, breathed only the inhuman wish of utter extermination.

Nor did his implacability receive any check from the humanity of his turbulent chiefs, who had from the beginning of the war blended personal animosity with political dissension, and eagerly snatched at the opportunity of indulging private malice, by the execution of a public enemy.

Hunted on all sides by the resentment and jealousy of Edward, and the malevolence of his nobles, the unfortunate partisans of Lancaster found no security in their retirements. Some form of law was still deemed requisite to be observed,
but

but the spirit of equity was fled : suspicion was equivalent to proof, trial to condemnation, and the scaffold incessantly streamed with the noblest blood of England.

Whilst with the most barbarous obduracy, Edward laboured to secure the permanent gratification of one passion, with the most licentious avidity he sought the indulgence of the other. Where the interests of his ambition did not interfere, he appeared in the most amiable light. His manly beauty, his insinuating manners, his easiness of access, his voluptuous course of life, rendered him extremely popular, particularly among the younger part of his subjects. His personal charms, added to the fascination of high rank, made him the universal passion of the female sex. Edward was not disposed to lose any of these advantages ; and when reports of the cruelty and libertinism of the court reached Ewelme, Eleanor
had

had the *inexpressible* mortification to hear that her favourite, lady Elizabeth Lucie, had been seduced by the king's insidious arts, and shared his roving heart with half of the citizens' wives in London.

In her present fortunate situation, Eleanor would have been happy, could she have tasted the Lethean stream, and obliterated from her memory its painful images. But the idea of her parents, and their guilty murderer, haunted incessantly her retired hours, and embittered all her enjoyments. The appearance at the castle was the perpetual subject of her thoughts ; and she could assign no other reason for the troubled ghost of St. Maur making itself visible to her, than that the means she had taken to insure his eternal peace had failed of their effect. This imagination wrung her soul with agony : she opened her mind to the confessor of the duchess ; he advised repeated

peated masses, and tranquilised her spirit by the most positive assurances of their unfailing efficacy.

With a mind now somewhat more at ease, Eleanor could look around and enjoy those beauties of taste and magnificence which every where presented themselves in the house and gardens of the duchess of Suffolk. This seat was built in the most superb gothic style, with a number of little towers, like a castle, with gilded vanes upon each, which glittered in the sun as they yielded to every breath of wind. It was situated in the midst of a spacious park, which was walled round with green stone, and filled with lofty and spreading trees, under whose shade were discerned large herds of the most beautiful species of deer. Equal to the front of the house was a court, with a high wall on each side, and a low wall in front; upon the flat stone coping of which were placed pots of the choicest flowers; and

and its moderate height admitted the view of a vista of noble oaks, which formed a grand avenue to the house. The court was also ornamented with a profusion of flowers in a parterre, disposed in the most ingenious devices.

The entrance into this mansion was by a magnificent portico, with a spacious and lofty hall, where the high-raised deïs evinced the exalted rank of its noble possessor; upon the upper end of which was a chair of state under a canopy, where the baron sat on solemn occasions, to receive the homage of his vassals, or administer justice to his villanage. Here also he feasted his compeers; while at tables on the common floor of the hall, the inferior guests were entertained. Round the hall ran a gallery from which, on the days of festivity, music enlivened the feast, or animated the dancer; and two large cathedral-like windows shed through painted glass their mild and

chastened light. The rooms were all of
 the most ample dimensions; some of
 them hung with tapestry, others adorned
 with carved wainscot, beautifully painted
 with vermilion and green. Nothing
 can be conceived more superb than the
 furniture of the bed-chambers; the state-
 bed was of a rich black Italian satin,
 striped with gold; and all the linen from
 the finest looms in Rennes. The win-
 dows were of painted glass, many of
 them exhibiting in vivid colours the sto-
 ries of holy writ; some of them the le-
 gends of the saints, and others the pleas-
 ing fables of the poets.

In the back front of the house was also
 a parterre, on each side of which a high
 and thick hedge of phillyreas ex-
 cluded from view the two wings of the
 edifice which formed the offices, and
 those grounds which were peculiarly ap-
 propriated to their convenience. This
 parterre led into a larger garden, adorn-
 ed

ed with many little circular ponds formed with marble, and many beautiful statues. This garden was also bounded on each side with phillyreas, but they were cut into arcades, which gave entrance on one hand into the refreshing shades of a thickly planted grove, and on the other into the ingenious mazes of a labyrinth, the winding paths of which were formed with such artful intricacy, that a person unacquainted with their clue might wander for hours within sight of the central arbour, yet incapable of arriving at it: but as a refreshment for his wearied steps, he would find in many parts of the maze, seats, shaded and perfumed by the eglandine, and other fragrant climbers.

The order and regularity of the well-governed family of the duchess equalled the magnificence of its habitation. At an early hour the matin bell summoned each individual into the chapel: the hour of dinner was precisely eleven,

and that of supper six. After which the bell for vespers again claimed their devout exercises, and dismissed the family to their various apartments.

Early snatched from the busy world, the duke of Suffolk had dedicated a large portion of his time to study ; but the polished conversation of his mother had preserved him from contracting either the rust of pedantry, or the moroseness and rusticity which are too apt to grow upon the mind and manners of a person occupied in abstruse ideas, and in a seclusion from social life. He was elegantly learned : in him were perfectly united the scholar and the gentleman ; and he was as fond of interchanging sentiments with an intelligent living companion, as of investigating those of a dead author. The conversable talents of Eleanor, as well as her musical powers, were highly acceptable to him, as well as to the duchess ; and both discovered such a fund of entertainment

tertainment in them, that in a very short time she was seldom permitted to be absent.

Conversation is a feast, which, to render reciprocally pleasing, each individual should contribute his proportionate share. No party of the kind could be better provided than the trio at Ewelme, to give the zest of variety to the rich regale.

The duke's share was literary discussion, and in the course of it he brought forward the sentiments of the moralist, the reasonings of the philosopher, the harmony of the poet, and the sportiveness of the wit. The duchess, educated in courts, perfectly acquainted with all the views and characters of those who had for many years directed all its springs, and governed those who governed England, was a volume of information of that great world which had recently ex-

isted, but was now vanished for ever. And our heroine, well read in polite literature, much beyond the customary bounds of female education in that age; who had conversed familiarly with the principal characters which *then* filled the scene; whose penetration was great, whose observation was minute, whose judgement was as nicely discriminating, as her wit was brilliant, formed a happy character in the medium of her companions, and was infinitely pleasing to both.

Among the authors which passed in review before our little society, Chaucer was not forgotten, particularly by Eleanor, who was an enthusiastic admirer of his numerous beauties, while she justly censured those libertine effusions of his pen, which nothing but the licentiousness and grossness of the age in which he lived, could be adduced to excuse.

“ With

“ With what a masterly hand,” she
 would say, “ has he drawn the portraits
 “ of his Canterbury pilgrims ! Yet why
 “ would he admit into their society such
 “ persons, whom to make speak *character-*
 “ *istically*, must offend all decency ? We
 “ may admire the extent and pliability
 “ of that genius, which can display a
 “ numerously varied set of characters in
 “ their own glowing colours ; but the
 “ wanton abuse of such powers changes
 “ our admiration to disdain. And in his
 “ love pieces, why will he with a heart
 “ evidently alive to all the exquisite ten-
 “ derness, the delicate sensibilities of that
 “ passion, why will he, by a too frequent
 “ grossness, excite—instead of the ardent
 “ plaudit of the feeling mind—the in-
 “ dignant blush of injured modesty ?
 “ Yet these imperfections, great as they
 “ are, and sufficient to blast the fame of
 “ an inferior poet, are but, in his daz-
 “ zling brightness, as spots in the sun ;
 “ for how truly admirable is he in the

" greater part of his works! What a
 " rich invention displays its luxuriance
 " in the Temple of Fame, where philo-
 " sophy wears the garb of pleasantry,
 " and sports with fancy! His moral
 " pieces, when he chuses to be grave,
 " are no less charming; witness that de-
 " lightful little dream of the Flower and
 " the Leaf: and his inimitable *balade*
 " on true gentility should be written
 " upon the heart of every noble youth in
 " the kingdom.—I have a peculiar plea-
 " sure in reciting it.

A BALADE.

" The firſte ſtock, father of gentleneſs,
 " What man deſireth gentyl for to be,
 " Muſt follow his trace, and all his wittis dreſs
 " Virtue to love, and vices for to flee:
 " For unto *virtue* 'longeth dignite
 " And not the reverſe, ſafely dare I deem,
 " Al weare he mitre, crown, or diadem.

" This

" This firſte ſtock was full of rightwiſneſs,

" True of his word, ſober, piteous, and free,

" Clean of his ghoſt, and loved buſineſs,

" Againſt the vice of ſloth, in honeſty :

" And but his heir love virtue as did he,

" He is not gentyl though he riche ſeem,

" Al weare he mitre, crown, or diadem.

" Vice may well be heir to old Richeſſe ;

" But there may no man, as men well may ſee,

" Bequeath his heir his vertuous nobleſſe ;

" That is appropriated unto no degree,

" But to that firſt father in majeſty,

" That maketh his heir him that can him queme,*

" Al weare he mitre, crown, or diadem."

The noble grand-daughter of Chaucer was not diſpleaſed at this free critique on the venerable bard ; for the applauſe ſo liberally given, compensated for the cenſure incurred by his too conſpicuous blemiſhes, though ſhe was rather ſurpriſed to hear them deemed ſuch by a *man* : and the duke ſmiled in ridicule at the ef-

* That forms him to his own reſemblance.

feminate objection to the sportiveness of the poet's muse. The duchess favoured Eleanor with the perusal of a manuscript which had never been published,* entitled "Chaucer's Dream," and condescended to give her an explanation of it.—"It contains," said that lady, "a
 "poetical and covert history of the love
 "and marriage of my grandfather's
 "friend and patron, John of Gaunt,
 "as he was called, I mean the duke of
 "Lancaster, the father of Henry the
 "fourth.

"The perpetual wars in which Edward the third was involved abroad,
 "left little leisure for the young nobility
 "to form permanent engagements in
 "their own land, or to attend there to
 "the more serious business of honourable
 "love, in an age when virtuous ladies,
 "conscious of their worth, were not

* It was not published before the year 1597.

"lightly

“ lightly to be won. But though he
 “ had formed no durable attachment,
 “ John of Gaunt, like most of his mar-
 “ tial companions, gave unlimited rein
 “ to eccentric love; and his heart found
 “ a fair enslaver wherever the chance of
 “ war pitched his tent, whilst every new
 “ object constantly obliterated the faint
 “ traces of the former. But upon the
 “ two years’ truce which his elder brother,
 “ Edward the black prince, had con-
 “ cluded with France, after the glorious
 “ battle of Poitiers, when the French
 “ king was brought prisoner to England
 “ by that youthful hero, and the nation
 “ breathed a while from foreign and do-
 “ mestic contention, holding in hostage
 “ for its peace, two captive monarchs,
 “ John of France, and David Bruce of
 “ Scotland; it was then that John of Gaunt
 “ had leisure to examine the beauteous
 “ inhabitants of his native island, where
 “ he was almost a stranger, and then it
 “ was he discovered among them one
 L 6 “ who,

“ who, from the first interview, fixed
 “ his roving heart, and bound the wan-
 “ derer in adamantine chains. The lady’s
 “ name was Blanch, the only daughter
 “ and heiress of the duke of Lancaster,
 “ one of Edward’s bravest generals, and
 “ a prince of the blood royal ; for he was,
 “ as well as the king, a great grandson
 “ of Henry the third.

“ Reports of the licentiousness and in-
 “ constancy of her lover’s former con-
 “ duct had been officiously made to
 “ Blanch by some of his rivals, which
 “ rendered that lady cold and difficult of
 “ access to him, and reduced him to the
 “ necessity of having recourse to every
 “ means of introducing himself into her
 “ presence, and by every interest he
 “ could form, impressing her with more
 “ favourable ideas of him.

“ Two young ladies were the favou-
 “ rite companions of Blanch, the daugh-
 “ ters

“ ters of fir Payne Rouet, a brave knight
 “ of Hainault, and who were recom-
 “ mended to her notice by the queen, her
 “ self of that country, being daughter to
 “ the count of Holland and Hainault.
 “ My grandfather, who was about the
 “ same age as John of Gaunt, was at
 “ that time in love with the youngest of
 “ those ladies, the fair Philippa; and
 “ drawn to the same house by a similar
 “ attraction, frequently met that prince.
 “ Equally gay and fond of pleasure, both
 “ men of superior understandings, and
 “ literary acquirements, a friendship
 “ commenced between them, rarely
 “ found among men of such dissimilar
 “ ranks in life, and which ended not but
 “ with their lives. By the interest of
 “ John, Chaucer was made page to the
 “ king, and the muse of the bard en-
 “ deavoured to repay the obligation;
 “ the first fruits of which was the com-
 “ plaint of the black knight, in which
 “ he makes his hero lament the coldness
 “ of

“ of his lady, which he imputes to the
 “ misrepresentations of malevolence and
 “ envy. This pathetic piece he prevail-
 “ ed upon Philippa to give into the
 “ hands of Blanch, and it had its effect
 “ in softening the mind of that lady. But
 “ now, though the affection of the lovers
 “ was found to be reciprocal, obstacles
 “ arose from other quarters, which ap-
 “ peared so formidable as to be deemed
 “ unsurmountable.—The lovers in the
 “ poem which I have shewn you, appear-
 “ ed to be dead: at length you know
 “ they were revived by a miracle. After
 “ the death of the duke of Lancaster,
 “ who had been greatly averse to the
 “ union of his daughter with John,
 “ by the dint of incessant sollicitation and
 “ importunity, the consent of the king
 “ was at length gained, a dispensation
 “ from the pope obtained, the lovers
 “ were united; and marrying the heiress
 “ of Lancaster, John succeeded to the
 “ honours, as well as fortune of that
 “ princely

“ princely house. My grandfather was
 “ wedded to Philippa soon after, as was sir
 “ Hugh Swynford, a knight of Lincoln,
 “ to her elder sister Catharine; but sir
 “ Hugh lived but two years after his
 “ marriage, and lady Swynford, at the
 “ entreaty of the duchess Blanch, re-
 “ turned to live with her.

“ You will readily imagine, that as
 “ the business of the poem ends with
 “ marriage, my explanatory narrative
 “ should terminate with it; yet I will in-
 “ dulge your curiosity, and my own gar-
 “ rulity, by a farther detail of the family
 “ history. The most beautiful, amiable,
 “ and accomplished of her sex, Blanch,
 “ lived but a few years to enjoy that do-
 “ mestic felicity she so much deserved;
 “ and my grandfather, after celebrating in
 “ one poem, which he has called a dream,
 “ the loves and union of the duke and
 “ duchess of Lancaster, undertook the
 “ melancholy office in another poem,
 “ which

“ which he also called a dream, of
 “ speaking in the most pathetic and heart-
 “ moving strains the woes of her afflicted
 “ lord, and drawing in vivid, but just
 “ colours, her exalted character. The
 “ duchess left three children, a son and
 “ two daughters; the latter of which, in
 “ her dying hour, she requested the duke
 “ might be left to the care and tuition
 “ of Catharine lady Swynford.

“ The afflicted husband, and the
 “ mourning friend of Blanch, mingled
 “ their tears together for her loss; and
 “ as they were the two dearest persons to
 “ her, they felt a mutual pleasure in be-
 “ wailing her together, and indulging in
 “ all the luxury of unrestrained woe.
 “ Alas, by what invisible ligatures are
 “ our passions connected! and what eye
 “ can discern the line, where the extreme
 “ of virtue ends, and vice begins? This
 “ tender sympathy of sorrow, impercep-
 “ tibly to themselves, graduated to a still
 “ more

“ more tender sympathy of affection :
 “ each unsuspectingly drank deep the
 “ poison of love, from the tears of the
 “ other ; and a reprehensible intercourse
 “ commenced without any premeditated
 “ guilt.

“ Notwithstanding this lapse from vir-
 “ tue in my great aunt—and sorry I am
 “ to confess that what was begun in in-
 “ advertence, was continued in the cooler
 “ hours of reflection—her intellectual
 “ perfections, and those polished graces
 “ which distinguished her deportment,
 “ preserved her the public esteem, and
 “ rendered her the most eligible person
 “ that could be found to form the mind
 “ and manners of ladies destined to tread
 “ in the highest walks of life : the fair
 “ daughters of Blanch were confided to
 “ her governance : with conscientious
 “ care, and unremitting attention, she
 “ discharged her trust ; nor did her soli-
 “ tude for the children of her friend
 “ abate,

“ abate, though she had the unspeakable
 “ mortification of seeing their ambitious
 “ father forget, in the fallacious pursuit
 “ of a crown, the dictates of love, and
 “ the claims of honour, and marry the
 “ only daughter of the king of Castile.

“ John was indeed deservedly disap-
 “ pointed in the dowry of his wife ; for
 “ her father, Peter the cruel, had incur-
 “ red the hatred of his subjects, and was
 “ driven by their just resentment from his
 “ throne. But the diadem with which he
 “ was unable to adorn his own brow, the
 “ duke of Lancaster found means to place
 “ on the head of his daughter ; he united
 “ the eldest to the king of Castile, the
 “ successor of Peter, as he did the
 “ younger to the king of Portugal : and
 “ lady Swynford had the felicity of see-
 “ ing her two pupils, whom she had ren-
 “ dered the most accomplished women of
 “ their time, adorned with the ensigns of
 “ royalty.

“ She

“ She now withdrew herself from all
 “ intercourse with the duke, retired to
 “ her late husband’s seat in Lincolnshire,
 “ and divided her hours between the ex-
 “ ercises of the strictest penitential devo-
 “ tion, and the education of her own
 “ children.

“ At length the death of Constantia,
 “ the princess of Castile, leaving John
 “ once more at liberty, he rewarded the
 “ long tried fidelity of Catharine, and her
 “ faithful services to his children, by an
 “ offer of his hand : they were married
 “ when she no longer possessed youth and
 “ beauty, but the more permanent charms
 “ of the mind remained in unfading splen-
 “ dor ; and though this marriage gave
 “ great umbrage to the ladies of the
 “ court, particularly of the royal family,
 “ who ill supported the idea, that lady
 “ Catharine Swynford should be made
 “ the second person of the kingdom, and
 “ take place of them all ; yet by the good
 “ sense

“ sense and prudence of her conduct, the
 “ sweetness and humility of her manners,
 “ she not only quickly reconciled them to
 “ her advancement, but entirely conciliated
 “ their affections ; and she gained
 “ such an ascendancy over the mind
 “ of the king, Richard the second, who
 “ had succeeded his grandfather in the
 “ throne, that he carried her, as well
 “ as the duke her husband, the year after
 “ their marriage, into France, at which
 “ time he espoused Isabel, the French
 “ king’s daughter, then very young, and
 “ who was placed under the peculiar
 “ care of the duchess of Lancaster, as the
 “ most proper person in the kingdom for
 “ a trust of such consequence.

“ Before this voyage, the duke had legitimated by act of parliament the
 “ children he had by Catharine, and gave
 “ them the surname of Beaufort, from a
 “ castle so called in Anjou, which came
 “ into his family by the lady Blanch of Ar-
 “ tois,

“ tois, queen of Navarre. There were
 “ four of these children, the late dukes of
 “ Somerset, and Exeter,* the cardinal
 “ of Winchester, and the lady of the late
 “ earl of Westmorland.

* The body of the duke of Exeter was, not many
 years ago, dug up from amidst the ruins of the ab-
 bey of Bury St. Edmunds, in perfect preservation:
 Some virtuosi of that town took the opportunity of
 possessing themselves of relics of a man who had
 figured with eclat on the stage of life full three
 hundred years before ; and the editor of this his-
 tory has beheld some of his graceful locks incircled
 with diamonds ; and a handsome and gentleman-
 like hand, with long fingers, finely shaped nails,
 which she contemplated with emotion, when she
 reflected that that hand had lifted a sword in the
 battle of Agincourt.



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